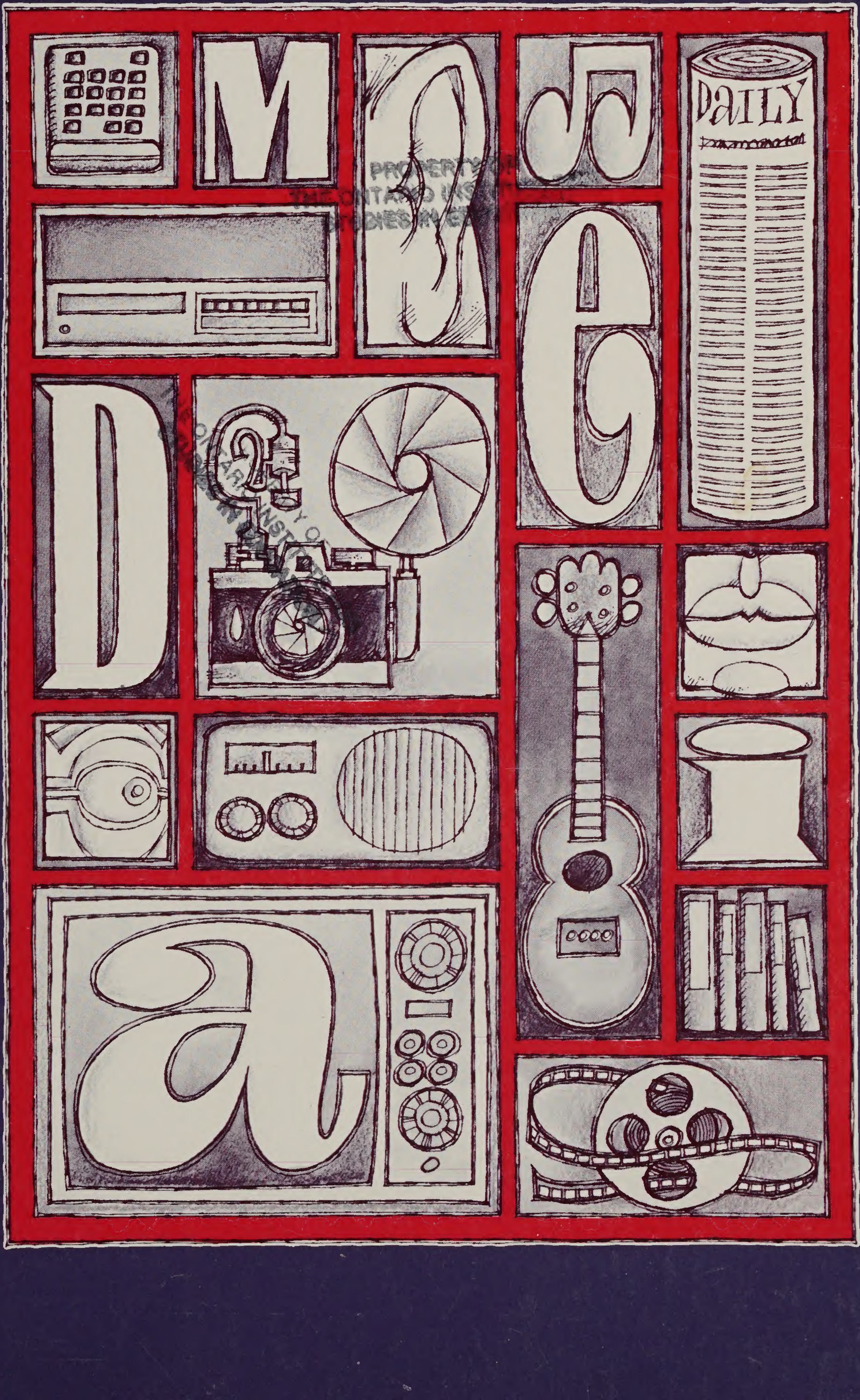
Resource Guide

Media Literacy

Intermediate and Senior Divisions, 1989



OHEC
373.190
9713
O59DE/C
-E9-12
(1989)

Ministry
of
Education
Ontario

Chris Ward, Minister
Bernard J. Shapiro, Deputy Minister

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2020 with funding from
University of Toronto

https://archive.org/details/medialiteracyint00onta

Contents

Preface 3

Introduction 5
- Rationale 5
- Aims 7
- Key Concepts 8
- Teaching Strategies and Models 11
- Media in the Curriculum 20

Television 27
- Overview 28
- Television's Construction of Reality 33
- Decoding Activities 42
- Types of Programs 52
- The Commercial Implications of Television 65

Film 73
- Overview 74
- Discussing Film in the Classroom 78
- Film and Society 83
- Reviewing a Film 86
- Film History and Genres 90
- Film and Literature 92
- Hands-on Activities 94
- Experimental Film/Video 96

Radio 99
- Overview 100
- Getting to Know Radio 105
- Radio's Golden Age 110
- Hands-on Activities 112
- Radio and the Other Media 114

PROPERTY OF
THE ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR
STUDIES IN EDUCATION

LIBRARY
NOV 1 9 2007
OISE/UT

Popular Music and Rock Video **117**
- Overview 118
- Getting Started 121
- Constructing Reality 123
- Decoding: Content, Values, Aesthetics 126
- Music-Industry Economics 128
- Music History: The Musical Landscape 130
- Hands-on Activities 131
- Additional Activities 133

Photography **135**
- Overview 136
- Responding to Images 139
- Using Photographs 141
- Making Photographs 143

Print **145**
- Overview 146
- Newspapers 151
- Magazines 165
- Mass-Market Paperbacks 168

Cross-Media Studies **171**
- Overview 172
- Advertising 173
- Sexuality in the Media 197
- Violence and the Media 207
- Canadian Identity and Ownership 211
- Reporting the News 214

Institutional Resources **221**
- Internal Resources 221
- External Resources 222
- Useful Addresses 225

Bibliography **227**

Acknowledgements **231**

PROPERTY OF
THE ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR
STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Preface

The purpose of this resource guide is to help teachers deal with the mass media and popular culture. Media-literacy skills should be part of any school program from Kindergarten to Grade 12 that encourages young people to understand a world profoundly influenced by the mass media. These skills should permeate the curriculum and should be considered an integral part of school programs. Students who are media literate are knowledgeable about the media and their influences.

Media literacy is an important, all-encompassing topic that permeates all facets of the curriculum and all levels of education. While all students have had a great deal of experience with the media, their experiences are varied. For this reason, the ideas and activities contained in this document are not specifically assigned to any grade. Only classroom teachers can determine how media literate their students are. They will have to decide on the appropriateness of each of the activities for the students in their classes.

This guide is predicated on the conviction that teachers can teach the key concepts of media literacy *in some form to all students at any level*. Media studies can be approached at a variety of levels ranging from the very simple to the sophisticated. This document stresses a combination of analytical, practical, and creative approaches that teachers, even if they have only a minimum knowledge of media literacy, can use in dealing with students' experience with the mass media.

There are many exciting, creative opportunities available to schools today as a result of recent technological advances in such areas as sound and video equipment. However, it is not assumed that the majority of schools will have such resources. Since this is neither an audio-visual-aids handbook nor a media resource book for specific subjects, teachers who wish information in these areas should consult some of the extensive literature that is readily available.

It is suggested that users of this guide begin with the Introduction, which provides a short but important foundation for the study of media. It is also useful to read the prefatory material on each medium, since many of the introductory activities are arranged sequentially.

In order to convey the precise meaning of a concept or a process, a limited number of specialized words have been used throughout the guide. The following words, many of which are found in the section in the Introduction on key concepts, recur frequently.

code A system of signs – verbal, visual, or aural – used to convey meaning.

construction In mass media, a vehicle that conveys meaning; for example, a completed television program, including the specific choices that have been made regarding editing, camera angles, and so on.

critical Depending on the context, *critical* can refer to an oppositional stance towards dominant communication structures or a reflective position on the meaning, biases, or value messages of a text; in the latter case, its use is derived from its application in critical thinking.

deconstruct To take apart and identify the elements that are used to make the meaning that is conveyed in the *construction*.

deliver In commercial television a network is said to "deliver" an audience to potential sponsors.

ideology A social and historical construction of ideas and social practices; a system of beliefs that are characteristic of a particular class or group.

jolts, jolts per minute A term used by the commercial-television industry to refer to moments of excitement generated by a laugh, a violent act, movement by people or objects within a frame, high decibels in the soundtrack, or rapid cutting.

texts The products of communication in the media, including print, film, television, and audio.

The Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario Teachers' Federation have worked together in all stages of the preparation of this resource guide. Their commitment to the project is a strong one, because the media have a great deal of influence on our young people.

Introduction

RATIONALE

The need to study the media in a critical and coherent way has become increasingly obvious in recent years, as they have come to occupy a central position in the cultural and political life of the Western world. Virtually all that we know, or think we know, about the world beyond our immediate experience comes to us through the media. There would be little problem with this if the media simply reflected reality. But, in fact, we now know that each medium of communication shapes or "codifies" reality in different ways, and we can no longer consider any message in any medium to be neutral or value free. All the mass media with which we come into contact contain messages about values, beliefs, and behaviours and, in addition, are shaped by economic factors. The fact that the media have remained outside the school curriculum at the same time as they have come to dominate so many aspects of our society, and, indeed, our individual consciousness, is a tribute to their power to influence us on levels of which we are unaware. It is not surprising, then, that we have come to study the media; it is only surprising that it has taken us so long to start.

The centrality of the media in our lives is manifested in many ways. Time is one of the key indicators. For many of us the total number of hours per week we spend as media consumers is exceeded only by the time we spend sleeping. By the time they finish high school, students will have spent an average of 11 000 hours in school, compared to more than 15 000 hours watching television and 10 500 listening to popular music. They will have seen several hundred films and been exposed to countless advertisements. Educators and parents share the responsibility for ensuring that students have an understanding of the implications of this media environment.

The media are also important shapers of our perceptions and values. They provide not only information about the world, but also ways of seeing and understanding it. This role of the media calls into question the common belief that the media's only functions are to provide news, information, or entertainment for their audiences. Media literacy enables teachers and students to challenge the great inequalities in knowledge and power that exist between those who manufacture information in their own interests and those who consume it innocently as news or entertainment.

Although schools are primarily print-oriented institutions, outside of school the most influential and widely disseminated modes of communication are the electronic media. Schools that do not teach students to deal critically with the media will continue to produce students who are likely to carry with them either a quite unwarranted faith in the integrity of media images and representations, or an equally dangerous, undifferentiated scepticism in which the media are viewed as insidious. The media need a well-informed and insightful audience as much as that audience needs them. Widespread media literacy is essential if students are to make rational decisions, become effective agents of change, and have an active relationship with the media.

The primacy of television in the lives of our students has prompted educator Neil Postman to point out (in *Teaching as a Conserving Activity*) that television is, in fact, "the first curriculum", and that it is the job of the school, "the second curriculum", to mitigate and moderate the effects of the first. The mass media do, in fact, offer a dynamic and persuasive curriculum, whose content includes knowledge about people, places, politics, events, history, economics, and crime; role models with regard to behaviours such as fashion, eating, drinking, travelling, and relating; and attitudes and values about such things as the use of power, politics, government, relationships, sexuality, violence, education, and employment.

We should, however, not lose sight of the fact that mass-media materials are creative products that may be assessed in terms of their aesthetic qualities. Media-literate students are able to appreciate the creativity and artistry in many of the products of the mass media.

In recent years there has been an increase in the role of new and emergent audio-visual technologies, especially in the realms of video production and the use of the computer. Media literacy should help students make sense of these developments and thereby cope with our information society.

Media literacy should also help students to acquire creative skills in audio-visual communications. The availability of media equipment will provide them with the necessary hands-on opportunity to express themselves, using both simple and sophisticated equipment. The development of community newspapers, radio stations, and cable-television stations provides not only increased opportunities for students to participate in the mass media but also growing possibilities for employment.

Media literacy, then, is concerned with the process of understanding and using the mass media. It is also concerned with helping students develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the mass media, the techniques used by them, and the impact of these techniques. More specifically, it is education that aims to increase students' understanding and enjoyment of how the media work, how they produce meaning, how they are organized, and how they construct reality. Media literacy also aims to provide students with the ability to create media products.

AIMS

PROPERTY OF
THE ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR
STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Media literacy aims to assist students to deal critically with the media and their role in their lives. The media-literate student should be able to make conscious critical assessments of the media, to maintain a critical distance on popular culture, and to resist manipulation. In more specific terms, media-literacy education should provide students with opportunities to:

- develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to interpret the ways in which the media actively construct reality;
- develop an awareness of the social, cultural, political, and economic implications of these constructions and their pervasive value messages;
- develop an appreciation and aesthetic understanding of the media;
- decode media products in order to identify and examine the cultural practices, values, and ideas contained in them;
- identify, interpret, and experience a variety of techniques used to create media products;
- recognize that those who construct media products are subject to a multiplicity of motivations, controls, and constraints, which include economic, political, organizational, technical, social, and cultural factors;
- recognize that everyone uses a selective and interpretative process to examine media texts. This process and the meanings obtained depend on psychological, social, cultural, and environmental factors.

Ultimately, media-literacy education must aim to produce students who have an understanding of the media that includes a knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses, biases and priorities, role and impact, and artistry and artifice. Media literacy is a life skill, and the success of an educational program must be judged by the behaviour of students after they leave school. If the school can provide them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and awareness, they will then be in a position to control their relationship with the media. Thus, the ultimate aim of media literacy is not simply a better awareness and understanding; it is critical autonomy.

KEY CONCEPTS

1. All media are constructions. Perhaps the most important concept in media-literacy education is that the media do not present simple reflections of external reality: they present productions, which have specific purposes. The success of these productions lies in their apparent naturalness. However, although they appear to be natural, they are in fact carefully crafted constructions that have been subjected to a broad range of determinants and decisions. From a technical point of view, they are often superb, and this, coupled with our familiarity with such productions, makes it almost impossible for us to see them as anything other than a seamless extension of reality. Our task is to expose the complexities of media texts and thereby make the seams visible.

2. The media construct reality. All of us have a “construct”, the picture we have built up in our heads since birth, of what the world is and how it works. It is a model based on the sense we have made of all our observations and experiences. When, however, a major part of those observations and experiences come to us preconstructed by the media, with attitudes, interpretations, and conclusions already built in, then the media, rather than we ourselves, are constructing our reality.

3. Audiences negotiate meaning in media. Basic to an understanding of media is an awareness of how we interact with media texts. When we look at any media text, each of us finds meaning through a wide variety of factors: personal needs and anxieties, the pleasures or troubles of the day, racial and sexual attitudes, family and cultural background. All of these have a bearing on how we process information. For example, the way in which two students respond to a television situation comedy (sitcom) depends on what each brings to that text. In short, each of us finds or “negotiates” meaning in different ways. Media teachers, therefore, have to be open to the ways in which students have individually experienced the text with which they are dealing.

4. Media have commercial implications. Media literacy includes an awareness of the economic basis of mass-media production and how it impinges on content, techniques, and distribution. We should be aware that, for all practical purposes, media production is a business and must make a profit. In the case of the television industry, for example, all programs – news, public affairs, or entertainment – must be judged by the size of the audience they generate. A prime-time American network show with fewer than twenty million viewers will not generally be kept on the air. Audience sampling and rating services also provide advertisers with detailed demographic breakdowns of audiences for specific media. A knowledge of this allows students to understand how program content makes them targets for advertisers and organizes viewers into marketable groups.

The issue of ownership, control, and related effects should also be explored. The tendency, both here in Canada and in some other countries, has been towards increased concentration of ownership of the individual media in fewer and fewer hands, as well as the development of integrated ownership patterns across several media. What this means in practical terms is that a relatively small number of individuals decide what television programs will be broadcast, what films will be screened, what music will be recorded and aired, and what issues will be investigated and reported. For example, many cities in Ontario have only one daily newspaper, and often it is part of a large chain. This has many implications for the reporting of controversial stories and for investigative journalism.

5. Media contain ideological and value messages. Media literacy involves an awareness of the ideological implications and value systems of media texts. All media products are advertising in some sense – for themselves, but also for values or ways of life. They usually affirm the existing social system. The ideological messages contained in, for example, a typical Hollywood television narrative are almost invisible to North Americans, but they would be much more apparent to people in developing countries. Typical mainstream North American media convey a number of explicit and implicit ideological messages, which can include some or all of the following: the nature of "the good life" and the role of affluence in it, the virtues of "consumerism", the proper role of women, the acceptance of authority, and unquestioning patriotism. We need to use decoding techniques in order to uncover these ideological messages and value systems. In dealing with these patterns, the teacher will be using both media-literacy techniques and values-education strategies.

6. Media have social and political implications. An important dimension of media literacy is an awareness of the broad range of social and political effects stemming from the media. (These two categories are not rigid, and they will inevitably overlap.) Students should be aware of the effects of media in such areas as the changing nature of family life and the use of leisure time. Although the mass media may not be directly responsible for creating values and attitudes, they serve to legitimize and reinforce them. This helps to explain why there is considerable peer pressure for students to belong to a group that consumes the same media products. The mass media thus often become the matrix within which young people define their relationships to their popular culture as well as to their friends.

In a larger context, the media today are closely linked with the world of politics and social change. Television can elect a national leader largely on the basis of image. At the same time it can involve us in civil-rights issues, a famine in Africa, or an incident of international terrorism. For better or for worse, we have all become intimately involved in national concerns and global issues.

For Canadians, our domination by American media has obvious cultural implications. The struggle for a distinctive Canadian identity will continue to be difficult, a challenge that media-literacy programs need to address.

7. Form and content are closely related in the media. Students should be able to see the close relationship between form and content. Central to this awareness is the thesis advanced by Marshall McLuhan that each medium has its own grammar and codifies reality in unique ways. Thus, different media will report the same event but create different impressions and different messages.

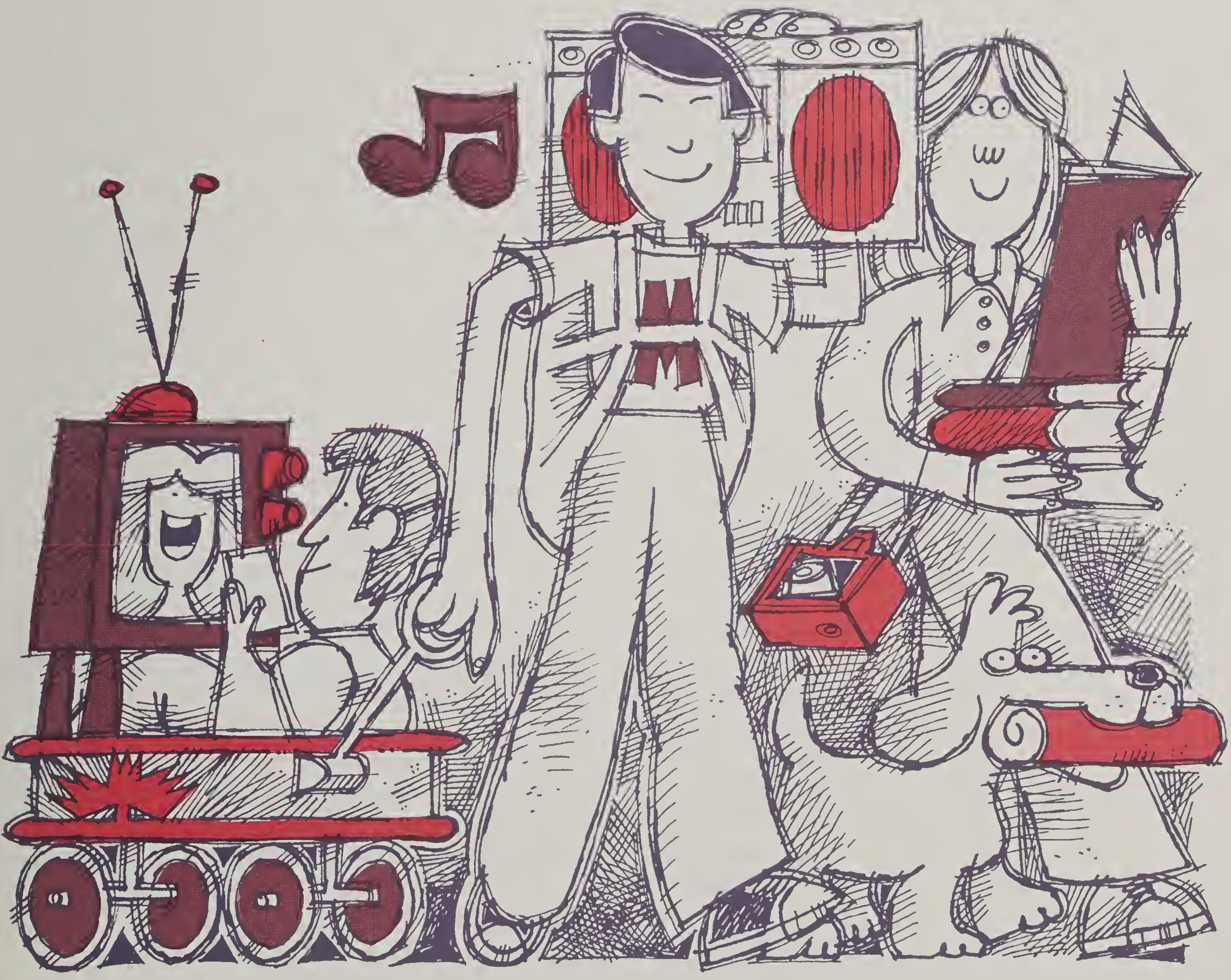
8. Each medium has a unique aesthetic form. Students should have the opportunity to develop media-literacy skills that will enable them not only to decode and understand media texts, but also to enjoy the unique aesthetic form of each. Our enjoyment of media is enhanced by an awareness of how pleasing forms or effects are created. Just as we note with pleasure pleasing rhythms in speech or poetry or the effective use of a literary device in a novel, we experience pleasure in our appreciation of media texts when we understand their technical artistry.

When all these concepts have been understood and validated by practical, creative, or production experiences, students should be able to apply their skills and general awareness to any specific media product they encounter. This process enables students to establish and maintain the kind of critical distance on their culture that makes possible critical autonomy: the ability to decode, encode, and evaluate the symbol systems that dominate their world.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND MODELS

INTRODUCTION

The teacher's attitude to the mass media and to students as avid media consumers is crucial to the success of any media-literacy program. Most students bring to the classroom an enormous amount of information about and experience with the media – in many cases, far more than do their teachers. While it is important for teachers to start where their students are, it is also necessary for them to lead their students to where they are not.



This guide stresses teaching inductively and beginning whenever possible with students' direct experiences with the media. The basic method of media studies is that of a "spiral curriculum", a concept developed by educator Jerome Bruner. The fundamental principle of this method is that the key concepts of any discipline can be taught in some form to students at any level. Thus, concepts initially introduced in simple form at the elementary level are, in successive years, explored, developed, and extended in increasingly sophisticated ways as the student matures and develops.

To take a relatively simple example, elementary school pupils might begin to explore the concept of the commercial implications of media by talking about the television programs they watch and, with the guidance of a teacher, distinguishing between program material and commercials, identifying the different purposes of each. At a later stage they could look at a variety of commercials aimed at children, discussing their reactions to them and perhaps beginning to evaluate their effectiveness. They could also talk about what they would put in commercials for children if they were making them. Older children could begin to analyse the techniques and appeals of commercials, planning and storyboarding some of their own. They could also explore the relationship between commercials and programming, perhaps examining the link between children's cartoon characters and sales of related products such as dolls or clothing. As they progress through the educational system, they may move on, for example, to more detailed examinations of commercials; studies of the effects of economic considerations on programming, content, and techniques; or research into issues such as the effects of ownership and control of media.

Because students are immersed in media, the role of the teacher must be that of a facilitator and a co-learner. The teacher must help students to negotiate meaning, engage in inquiry and research, identify patterns, and create their own media productions.

It is important to stress the positive features of the mass media rather than to dwell at length on the negative. It is also essential that students be encouraged to explore the values and the tastes that are relevant to their own immediate cultural context. This fundamental premise of values education implies that the teacher should not be imposing a set of elitist values on the class. (For example, the teacher should avoid holding up "Masterpiece Theatre" and CBC drama as caviar and everything else as junk food for the masses.) It may be difficult to find socially redeeming values in many of the programs that have high audience ratings or in rock videos, but it is these very examples that our students are eager to discuss. Using methods such as the inquiry model and applying the key concepts of media literacy in critical discussion, the teacher can empower students to discover meaning on their own, thus giving them critical autonomy.

Because of the immense diversity in the media and the sheer quantity of information, teachers may feel overwhelmed. This resource guide offers a whole range of coping strategies. First, many avenues for media literacy are already available. For example, most subject disciplines offer approaches to the topic (see pp. 20-26), and many of the activities suggested in this document are ideally suited to the development of speaking, listening, and writing skills. Second, this guide encourages a plurality of approaches, including the application of interdisciplinary perspectives and critical- and creative-thinking strategies.

By necessity, media teachers will be eclectic. As well, the constantly changing content of the media and of popular culture, along with their many new and evolving forms and technologies, will necessitate the concept of "a movable text" that is made up by the teacher, the class, or both together. Such a text will encompass current newspaper and magazine clippings, new videos, audiotapes, record albums, and resource people from the community. In such an enterprise, it should be evident that media study is ideally suited to the collaborative strength that is gained from team teaching.

To avoid duplicating activities and audio-visual materials each year, teachers, department heads, and principals will have to plan a coherent and, in many cases, a sequential media-studies program. This may prompt the formation of board media-literacy committees, which can organize workshops for teachers and design media curricula especially suited to local needs.

Teachers not familiar with essential equipment such as slide projectors and the video-cassette recorder will need to develop the competency required to make media literacy worthwhile for their students. For example, effective use of the freeze frame or the scanning mechanism on a VCR can enhance the use of video considerably.

Throughout the guide there are many opportunities for practical media production, an important dimension that complements the application of the key concepts and decoding exercises. Practical activities should never become an end in themselves; otherwise, the critical inquiry that is central to media study may be ignored.

SPECIFIC APPROACHES

1. The inquiry model The inquiry model is a structured framework that will help students recognize basic issues and provide strategies for developing subject content. This model helps to stimulate open questioning and encourages students to be intellectually curious about the world; it also demands that they have the proper tools for meaningful research and discussion. Since many of the topics that interest students (e.g., censorship, bias in news coverage, popular culture trends) need to be focused as soon as possible, this methodology is ideally suited to media study.

The inquiry model is especially suited to the introduction of media-literacy activities in the classroom. For example, one can easily apply the model to a provocative short film, a television documentary, or an excerpt from a feature-film video that reveals a powerful moral dilemma. Through an intense shared experience that raises a whole range of issues, students are enabled to see the value of a structured framework for facilitating focused research and critical thinking. For more information on this model, consult the ministry resource document *Research Study Skills* (Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1979).

The inquiry model might be used, for example, to explore the following question: "Why do Canadians seem to prefer American media?" The following alternative solutions might be investigated:

- Media content, from films to television, is predominantly American in origin.
- American programs are generally cheaper to buy; have better production values, which reflect lavish budgets; and have a faster pace than do most Canadian programs.
- Quality Canadian programs may reflect our identity, but most Canadians' indifference about or insecurity in this area compels them to avoid endeavours that hold up the mirror to our society.
- Intense competition in the United States ensures that only the most salable commercial products are seen.

Students might then explore the alternatives by collecting data in the following ways:

- Statistics are available in resources on the Canadian film industry, such as *Cinema Canada* (a monthly periodical that focuses on the Canadian film industry and is available by subscription from P.O. Box 398, Outremont Station, Montreal, Quebec H2V 9Z9), and from the reports of various commissions on broadcasting and the film industry.
- Students could check with Canadian television networks on the comparative costs of buying an American show – especially those in reruns – and of producing a Canadian series. Students could watch some typical Canadian shows and compare them with the American product in order to notice differences in themes, characterization, and pace.

- Students could check the ratings of one of the better Canadian television series and the box-office take for some of our critically acclaimed films. In addition, by formulating a questionnaire and having a cross section of people answer it, students could determine whether the results confirm or deny the notion that Canadians are indifferent to or insecure about seeing their identity portrayed.
- Students could write or talk to Canadian media professionals regarding the allegations about the benefits of competition in the United States.

2. Critical-thinking strategies The critical-thinking movement in the 1980s has helped to provide some important strategies for teachers of media literacy. According to Robert Ennis, *critical thinking* refers to a body of intellectual skills and abilities that enable one to decide rationally what to believe or do. It also includes a set of values: the pursuit of truth, fairness or open-mindedness, empathy, autonomy, and self-criticism. A "strong sense" critical thinker is one who strives to live in accordance with the values of critical thinking and who is able to think dialogically. A typical mass-media issue involves a blending of intellectual, affective, and moral responses. Many issues carried in the media demand that we move back and forth between opposing points of view. It is here that good dialogical thinking can help us out. Dialogical thinking involves a dialogue or extended exchange between points of view or frames of reference. The following checklist of typical critical-thinking skills is reproduced from Robert Ennis, "A Concept of Critical Thinking", *Harvard Educational Review*, Winter 1962: 38.

Critical-Thinking Checklist

- distinguishing between verifiable facts and value claims
- determining the reliability of a claim or source
- determining the accuracy of a statement
- distinguishing between warranted and unwarranted claims
- detecting bias
- identifying stated and unstated assumptions
- recognizing logical inconsistencies
- determining the strength of an argument

PROPERTY OF
THE ONTARIO INSTITUTE FO
STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Teachers interested in more information on these approaches should consult Eleanor MacLean, *Between the Lines: How to Detect Bias and Propaganda in the News and Everyday Life* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1981) and the current books and articles on critical thinking in educational journals such as *Educational Leadership* and *Phi Delta Kappan.*

3. Values education The mass media are an ideal resource for the discussion of moral dilemmas, the development of moral reasoning, and the use of techniques such as values clarification. Dialogical reasoning, which has been described as an important part of critical thinking, can play a significant role in discussions of topics such as the pros and cons of the mass media, government control of media, censorship, advertising, and the moral values identified in popular television and films. Consult the bibliography in the ministry's resource guide *Personal and Societal Values* (Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1983) for further information on values education.

4. Media from the perspective of subject disciplines Teachers who want to relate the study of the media to their subject disciplines should refer to the next subsection, "Media in the Curriculum". In relation to media-literacy analysis in a subject context, it is important to stress that teachers will need to move beyond conceiving of media simply as audio-visual aids.

5. Cross-media studies and interdisciplinary strategies The issues, trends, and special events of our time are simultaneously reflected in all or several of the mass media. Hence, whether the topic is the arms race, the promotion of a rock star, an advertising campaign, or sexuality and violence in the media, a cross-media analysis is required. The effective application of the key concepts of media depends on the integration of several media. The section "Cross-Media Studies" contains several units that demonstrate a variety of interdisciplinary approaches. A discussion of violence in the media, for example, might combine knowledge from history, literature, sociology, psychology, communications theory, and linguistics.

6. Creative experiences As well as being able to "decode" the symbols that dominate their society, students should be able to "encode" them. Just as we must integrate writing with the development of reading skills, we should integrate formal media analysis with media production. Thus, creative or production activities should be an essential component of media studies in the classroom. These creative activities can range from something as short and simple as sequencing a series of photographs to a project as complex as the production of a rock video. Many students will grasp the analytic material only if they have undergone production experiences.

7. Semiotics Semiotics is the science of signs and is concerned primarily with how meaning is generated in film, television, and other works of art. It is concerned with what signs are and the ways that information is encoded in them. Some of the decoding/deconstructing activities in this guide use strategies from semiotics. This approach, which has had considerable influence on European academics and media teachers, is now coming into its own in North America. While it may appear to be intellectually demanding and somewhat abstract, it can yield many rewards for the dedicated media teacher. The following books are useful references in this area: Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1972); James Monaco, *How to Read a Film* (London: Oxford University Press, 1982); Robert Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982).

8. Reading the media environment Each medium of communication has its own biases and ideology. When we interact with a medium of communication, we are influenced as much by the form of the medium as by its message. To explore this notion further, we should ask the following question about each communication medium: What would life be like without this medium? Finding answers to the following questions might also help us to understand better the effects of our interactions with our media of communication:

- How does it work? (e.g., technically, physiologically)
- When/how was it discovered/invented?
- How did its use develop? (e.g., socially, economically, politically)
- Who are its outstanding users? What do they communicate? How?
- What are the medium's present conventions? How did they develop?
- What are its present limitations? How are they best exploited?
- How does the medium affect its users and how do they affect it?
- How have other media affected this one?

Further information in this area can be obtained from Marshall McLuhan, Kathryn Hutchon, and Eric McLuhan, *City as Classroom: Understanding Language and Media* (Agincourt, Ont.: Book Society, 1977).

9. Alternative points of view As a counter to the mass media, which are generally conservative and constitute a major industry in which the profit motive is paramount, teachers, depending on the level of the class, can show films and videos that present an alternative vision or a different kind of perception and experience to that of the mainstream media. These should be a supplement to, and not take the place of, the study of popular models. Many excellent narrative and documentary films by the National Film Board and by many experimental filmmakers and video artists, for example, will challenge students' ways of seeing the world. Of course, good literature and art will do the same. Certainly contemporary culture can be illuminated from many sources: by a small-circulation magazine with a distinctively alternative point of view; by a provocative CBC sound documentary; by a record of a contemporary fusion jazz combo, a small independent rock band, or the work of a performance artist/musician such as Laurie Anderson.

10. Full-credit courses in media literacy These courses, offered at the secondary school level, will probably be presented as one of the optional courses in English or the visual arts and will reflect a great diversity of approaches. The following are examples of areas covered by such courses:

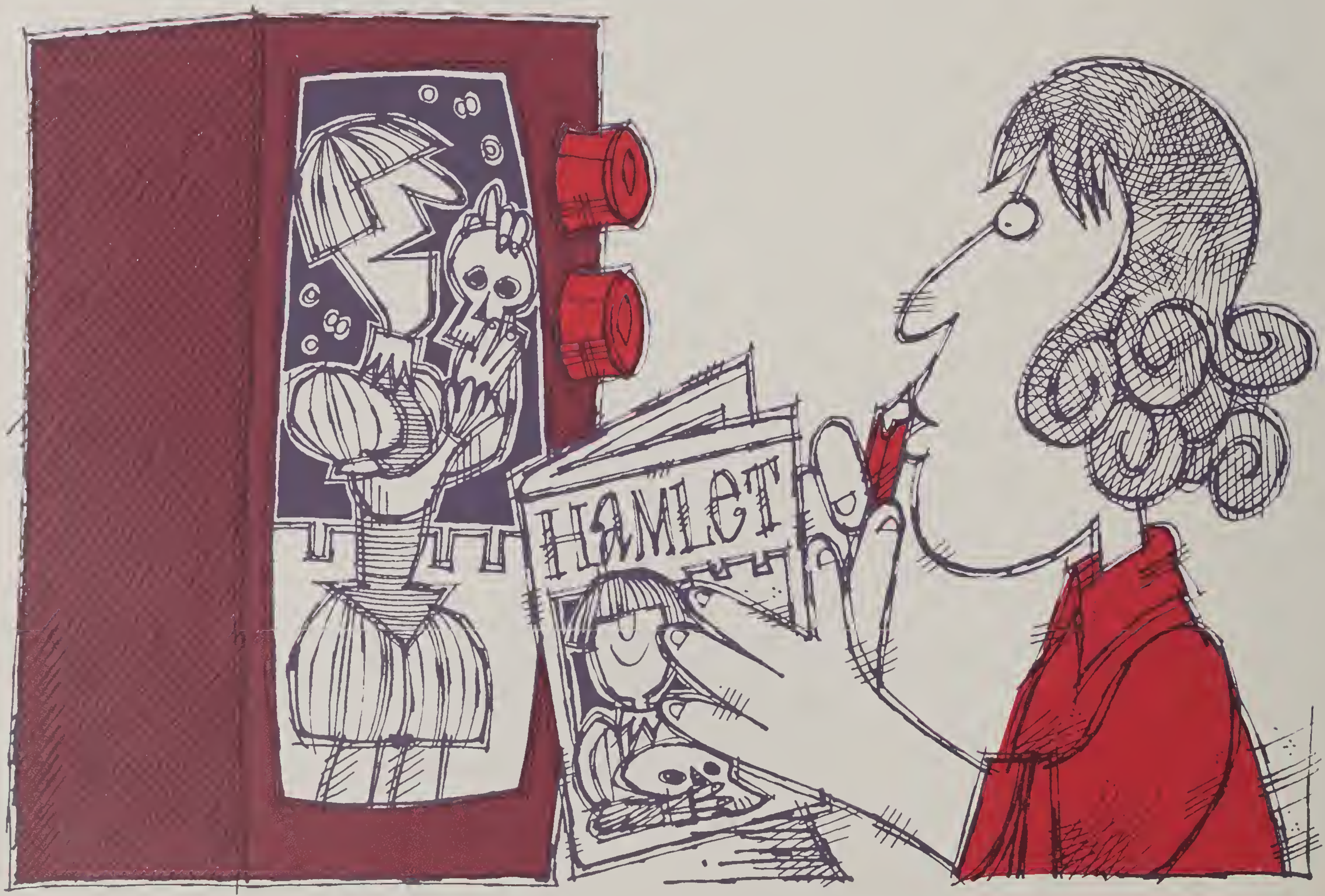
- **Pop culture** An understanding of some of the following: popular culture and trends; the coverage of royalty; the appeal of the current rock megastars; pop culture's fascination with rituals; the nature and power of celebrities; fashion TV (television programs that are concerned with the world of fashion, showcasing the latest trends and profiling fashion designers); fast-food happiness (the extensive marketing of fast-food restaurants through advertising campaigns that convey the idea that such eateries bring happiness by solving all one's problems); fads – from pet rocks to Cabbage Patch dolls; the appeal of shopping malls; pop culture in a foreign country; the culture of toys; the appeal of cult films; patterns in teen films; formulas in best sellers; the appeal of Harlequin romance novels; the pop culture of the fifties and sixties.
- **The world of images** Media images of men and women; analysing photographs; adolescent magazines; analysing advertisements – signs and codes; dividing the world.
- **The Canadian identity** What constitutes our identity and how well the media reflect it; the role of the CBC; the development of the Canadian film industry; the sound of Canadian music; comparisons of the portrayal of the Canadian identity in the mass media and in literature, theatre, and art.
- **The information society** Current theories and research on the impact of the electronic media; the theories of Marshall McLuhan regarding the global village, the nature of perception, and the use of our senses; the dynamics of third-wave technology (electronic technology and the use of computers); the computer revolution; the role of new and emergent technology.
- **The study of specific media or a genre within a medium** Course units are often devoted to in-depth study of a specific medium (e.g., film, television, the newspaper). The study of a medium can be subdivided further through the study of specific genres. A unit on a genre in films might explore the nature of horror films; in radio, suspense drama; in television, the evolution of sitcoms.
- **Television production** The nature of the television medium; the dynamics of television production; script writing and storyboards; the use of the portable video camera; the creation of a mini-documentary and a commercial; the use of special effects; applications of the mobile studio.

MEDIA IN THE CURRICULUM

Since media literacy is an essential dimension of all curricula, teachers will want to capitalize as much as possible on their expertise in both the content and the methodology of their subject specialties. The challenge will be to find the appropriate media-literacy connections to illuminate an issue or a text.

ENGLISH

Teachers of English have been among the strongest advocates of media literacy in the schools. This is understandable, since the teaching of English contains many components that are prominent in media studies: aesthetics, the use of language, genre study, and the critical analysis of texts. English teachers have incorporated media into their courses through such activities as film-literature comparisons, film and television reviews, examinations of the language of advertising, and script writing.



Media education in the English classroom, however, has sometimes stressed the negative aspects under the guise of developing a "discriminating response". In such a context popular culture has not fared very well. Furthermore, what has been examined are primarily literary techniques. What has been left out are all the important ideological, economic, political, and historical considerations that inform media texts. Fortunately, many of these interdisciplinary approaches are beginning to spread into English studies and are helping to provide some new dimensions to critical discourse. As secondary school English departments develop optional courses in media, it is to be hoped that these elements will be present.

The following are some ways by which English teachers can incorporate media literacy (not to be confused with audio-visual aids) into their programs:

Film-literature comparisons This topic is discussed in "Film and Literature" in the film section of this document. Since the film version of a piece of literature invariably differs from the original, the critical challenge is in helping students assess the reasons for the changes and their effect on themes, characterization, and enjoyment.

Script writing Students should be encouraged to try writing film scripts from books and even from poems studied in class. Thinking cinematically often enhances insights into the literary experience. Students should also try to write original scripts, which can be filmed or videotaped.

Multimedia thematic units The availability of good short films and feature-film videos allows for the exploration of a variety of themes, such as the nature of courage, the hero, and comedy (for examples see the film section of this document). In this kind of activity teachers need to go beyond simply discussing content and themes; they should consider with students the unique ways in which each medium codifies reality.

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

We have all been exposed to images of foreign countries through the media and have experienced other cultures vicariously through television and film. However, we seldom question the accuracy of the portrait that this information presents to us; no one film about a foreign country can be expected to express accurately its "reality".

Films, videos, and photographs are used extensively in the social sciences. Students hold a strong view that documentary and educational films are objective in their structuring of content. They implicitly trust the factual commentary and are seldom encouraged to consider the techniques that media producers use to create this uncritical response to their messages. The selection of particular images in a media text must be discussed, for this factor often influences our understanding of a region or a culture.

History The methodologies used by history teachers to involve their students in research include having students recognize the standpoint and attitudes of an observer; distinguish among different points of view in the evidence; compare pieces of evidence to see if they confirm one another; and produce a convincing and satisfying account that is as fair as possible to all the sources. It is apparent that there are some important parallels here with many media-literacy skills.

The following are some sample activities that require the history teacher to use the strategies of media literacy.

1. Students can view Peter Watkins's seventy-minute film *Culloden* (available from BBC Television Films and suitable for Senior secondary school). This film is more than just a presentation of the famous battle between the English and the Scottish forces in 1746. Watkins's point of view is crucial. His actors speak directly to the camera; the battle scenes are gory and unglamorous. To appreciate the film, the class will need to understand the basic elements of documentary and docudrama, as well as a variety of film techniques.

2. A recreation of history such as the CBC's telecast *Riel* is another example of how a historical figure can be presented. It raised a key question: To what extent was Riel glamourized? Some critics felt that the Métis were shown as "savages" and the English as "effete buffoons". Students can discuss how these effects were achieved through the direction of the actors, the camera work, and the editing techniques.

3. Students can discuss the following: How are politicians marketed so that they can handle press conferences and television debates? In short, how is a media image created?

Geography Geography is a subject that relies heavily on visual representation. Media images of some well-known places in the world are so strong and fixed that they may interfere with what the teacher may want to convey about the reality of that country. What have been characterized as "image regions" are those areas whose climate, social systems, terrain, and social attitudes have acquired a distorted image in the public mind. For example, the image of the southern United States has been fixed in many people's minds as a result of *Gone With the Wind* as a place where gallant men and charming women flirt outside mansions with glistening white porticos. The ads for the West Indies portray them as a carefree tourist paradise of waving palms, endless beaches, and obliging natives. The following are some sample activities that can be used in geography classrooms.

1. Students can compare the images of cities such as Dallas, New York, Los Angeles, and Miami in well-known television series with the socio-economic realities of those cities.

2. The class can examine travel films that were made explicitly to attract tourists to various countries. Students should try to answer questions such as the following: To what extent is there a formula for these films? What do they leave out? Why?

3. Students can view films that have been made by corporations or governments to explain or promote their interests. They can attempt to determine how the biases of these groups are revealed.

4. The images of the developing nations are often noteworthy for what has been called "structured absences". For example, one study of geography texts (David Wright, "Distorting the Picture", *The Times Education Supplement*, November 6, 1981) showed that 84 per cent of the photographs of South Africa were provided by the South African government. The pictures of South Africa consisted of five elements: (a) magnificent scenery, (b) impressive skyscrapers, (c) huge mines, (d) prosperous farmland, (e) picturesquely dressed Africans by their kraals. Students can outline a film script or a series of photographs that would suggest another view.

FAMILY STUDIES

The image of the family in the media frequently contrasts with students' experiences. Popular prime-time sitcoms from "All in the Family" to "The Cosby Show" can be deconstructed in order to see what values are espoused by such shows and the nature of their appeal. The following are other media topics that are ideally suited to family studies: the representation of the family in advertising; sexuality and sexual stereotyping in the media; and the culture of violence. Worthwhile alternative role models that appear from time to time in certain television specials and feature films might also be presented.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In addition to their treatment in science fiction, there are numerous references to science and technology in newspapers, films, magazines, and novels. Television, in both news and entertainment programs, constantly packages scientific issues and information. The success of David Suzuki's "The Nature of Things" (CBC) demonstrates our keen interest in the achievements and issues of science and technology. Some of this material can be integrated into the science curriculum by pointing out connections between the scientific issues raised by the media and the scientific principles underlying them.

However, the material from the media cannot be regarded as a simple purveyor of experience and information. It must be subjected to critical analysis, both as science and as media text. This holds true for any of the films and videotapes that may be shown in the classroom.

The following quote provides an interesting perspective on an aspect of the relationship between science and the media that may profoundly affect our future:

> Science and technology embody choices and priorities selected from the manifold ways of ordering and using natural processes. Television is extremely important in this process since it has become the principal agenda-setting medium in our society as far as the general public is concerned.
>
> Tony Bennet, S. Boyd-Bowman, et al., *Popular Television and Film* (London: The British Film Institute, 1981), page 285

The following are some sample activities in this area.

1. The usual mode of presentation of a topic in science is narrative, linear, expository, and didactic. Programs tend to alternate between a voice-over approach and the use of a "talking head", usually a man in a white lab coat (the expert). Students can discuss the strengths and limitations of this technique and how we are persuaded that what we are hearing is objective and the truth.

2. Using a video camera, science students can learn a great deal about the media through videotaping a science experiment. Video equipment can also be used for student documentaries on local industries or on technologists or scientists working in the local area.

A number of activities may also be found in the material in the television section on documentaries, public-affairs shows, docudrama, and nature programs.

VISUAL ARTS

Visual Arts, Intermediate and Senior Divisions, Curriculum Guideline (Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1986) contains many suggestions in the areas of photography and electronic imaging. The possibilities for media literacy in the visual arts are enormous. Many of the decisions made in the media are based on aesthetic considerations. The role of art in a mass-media-dominated society is of major concern for aspiring artists. Art teachers need to assess more than just the principles of pleasing form when looking at media; they need to consider all of the aspects that have been outlined in the section on key concepts (pp. 8-10).

MUSIC

Students are immersed in rock music and rock video. While some music teachers use rock as a resource, many consider it inappropriate for their music courses. However, there are many valuable connections that can be made through the comparison of traditional and popular music. The popular-music section will enable music teachers to help their students investigate the aesthetics, the value messages, and the commercial implications of this pervasive form.

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

The material in "Cross-Media Studies" entitled "Sexuality in the Media" (pp. 197-206) will be especially relevant. Other activities may be found in "Television" in the section on decoding (pp. 42-51) and, specifically, in the unit on televised sports (p. 47). Since many films and videotapes are shown in physical and health education classes, the same caveats that have been given in regard to history, geography, and science will also apply to this area.

MATHEMATICS

Teachers of mathematics will find that a great deal of research in the mass media depends on statistics. Hence, the skills of compilation and graphing will be important. In the area of television, the methods of rating the most watched prime-time programs depend on the exact use of mathematical information.

RESOURCE CENTRE TEACHERS

Today's resource centres contain not only books but also a good cross section of popular periodicals, phonograph records, slides, and audio- and videotapes. In the area of print, many periodicals, such as *Time* and *Maclean's*, require not only the traditional reading skills but also media-literacy decoding skills as well. Resource centre teachers can play a valuable role by helping students and teachers to understand the strengths and limitations of each medium when they are selecting resource materials.

Educators are reminded that copying copyright material is not allowed without permission.

Television

Television has turned out to be one of the most phenomenal of all human inventions. It touches lives more intimately and pervasively than anything that predates it, with the possible exception of the discovery of fire.

Ellen de Franco, *TV On/Off* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Goodyear Publishing, 1980)

OVERVIEW

HISTORY

Canadian children view 183 hours of commercials and witness 1286 human deaths per year, and, by the time they are twelve, have watched more hours of American television than they have spent in school. In light of these observations, it is amazing to realize that television has been with us in Canada only since 1952; it is now an integral part of our landscape.

Commercial television was originally conceived of as a sales tool. The first station was launched by established radio broadcasters in Philadelphia, and its first commercial was for refrigerators.

The first television shows and celebrities were borrowed from radio. Soap operas, quiz shows, dramas, and the news entered the new medium with few initial changes. Since the first cameras moved very little and the images were black and white with poor pictorial quality, the dependence on radio-style talk may have been a good thing. As technical facilities changed and producers learned to exploit the rich potential of the medium, there were corresponding changes in the style of programming.

Although television was invented in the 1920s and engineers had all the commercial production and broadcasting plans ready to begin in the late 1930s, the Second World War created new priorities for the electronics industry that postponed television broadcasting in Canada until 1952. While the United States used two and then three private networks, Canada simply expanded the CBC Radio Network to include television.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was established by Parliament to foster Canadian unity and the expression of Canadian identity; to provide information and entertainment for a population with diverse interests and tastes in both English and French; and to serve the various and different needs of Canada's regions. While the CBC is financed mostly by the federal government, it receives additional funds from paid advertising on its television stations. Although the CRTC regulations require a minimum of 60 per cent Canadian program content, 70 per cent of the CBC's programming is Canadian.

The next largest component of the Canadian broadcasting system includes privately owned networks like CTV, which is owned by its sixteen affiliated stations, and Global; local independent stations; and pay-TV services. At the opposite end of the spectrum are the public broadcasters such as TVOntario, whose funding comes mainly from the provincial government with additional money from grants from corporations and voluntary contributions from viewers.

ECONOMICS

In the beginning sponsors purchased whole blocks of time, as they had on radio; they provided all the commercials and had considerable power in deciding the content of the programs. The networks wanted to control all of their programming, however, and they began selling sixty-second segments rather than sixty-minute blocks.

Broadcasters generate income by selling advertising time to advertisers. Time is fifteen-, thirty-, and sixty-second units or spots, and the rates vary according to the time of day and the size of the audience. Prime-time spots, which fall between 8:00 and 11:00 p.m., the times when the audience is largest, are the most expensive. Often broadcasters offer package deals, in which an advertiser might be offered two prime-time, two near-prime-time, and three daytime spots for less than the cost of buying each individually.

Networks generate income by selling time to advertisers. Advertisers buy time according to the number and type of consumers watching at a particular moment. The science of finding this information is called *demographics*. Companies such as the Bureau of Broadcast Measurement and A.C. Nielsen make daily measurements of viewing patterns to determine the predominant age, sex, income, and education of audience members watching each quarter-hour of each program. This information is sold at a high price to advertisers, who use it to place their ads in the most opportune spot in the television schedule so that their spot, or commercial, will be seen by the maximum number of appropriate consumers.

Because large audiences of big-spending consumers are advertisers' main targets, broadcasters spend a great deal of time and energy finding programs that will attract them; these audiences are then sold to advertisers, who welcome opportunities to make other commercial connections. For example, "G.I. Joe" programs were created by the Hasbro company to sell action-figure toys to the most likely consumers. Soon after "Miami Vice" became a top-rated show, lines of Miami Vice clothing and accessories appeared in stores.

The 1970s and 1980s saw significant developments in new technologies, networks, and specialty services. In 1984 Canada had the highest percentage of cable transmission in the world (61 per cent). Canada is indeed a wired nation. Cable and pay-TV companies generate their income by selling subscriptions to viewers, who receive the programs by wire rather than antennas. Satellite dishes, a major phenomenon in Northern Ontario, have allowed people to watch television shows without having to watch commercials or pay a subscription, even though some broadcasters regard this as theft, have lobbied to change the laws, and have actually blocked signals.

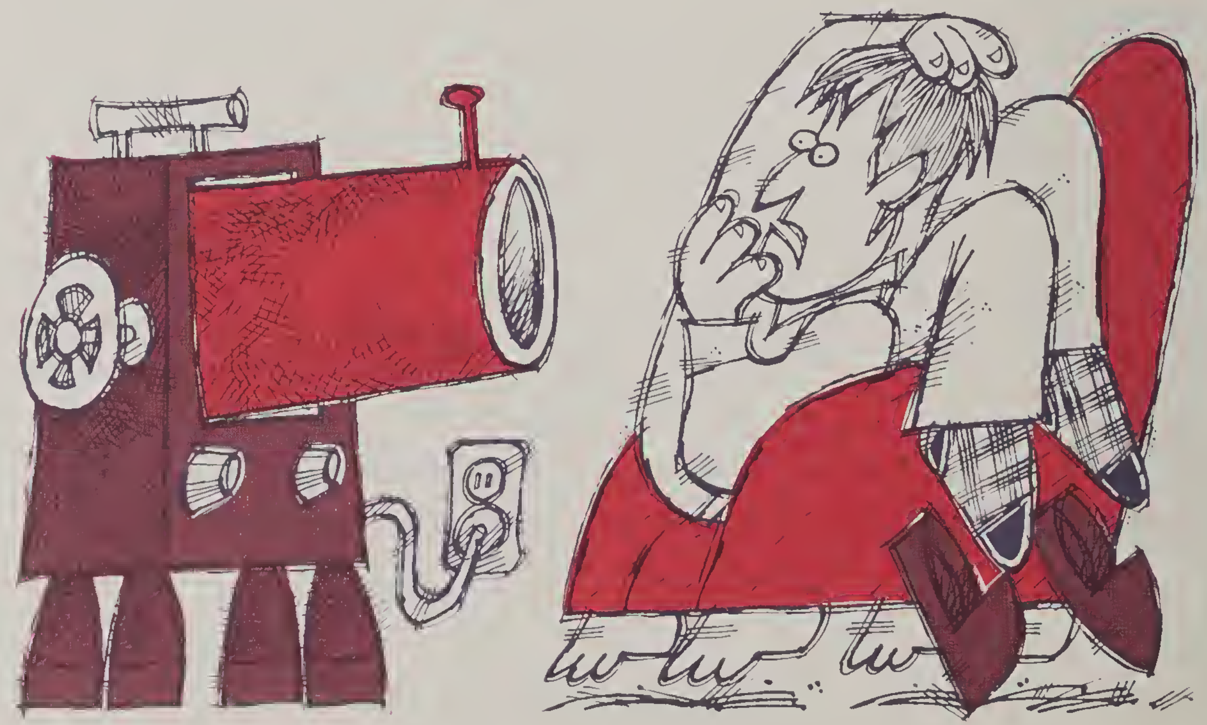
THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION

Television's ability to broadcast live on location creates an immediacy and a credibility that encourage people to believe that what they see is the truth, rather than a construction of reality. Natural disasters and hostage takings are often presented to us as real-life drama. When we see the replays over and over, as often happens in newscasts, we may get the impression that the whole world is having a disaster or being held hostage. When the space shuttle *Challenger* blew up, the videotape was replayed by one network more than fifty times on the first day alone. Research reveals that heavy television viewers regard the world, including their own neighbourhood, as unsafe, even if the facts do not support such a perception. Even in small towns, people will assume that most big-city problems of crime and violence are also theirs.

Television's ability to reproduce events so convincingly can lead viewers to believe that everyone leads the lifestyles seen on television. This view of the world can be used by advertisers to create a near-sightedness that suggests that we, like everyone else, should live a materialistic lifestyle, rich in fashionable clothes, appliances, and exotic vacations. The repeated message is that we can buy our way to happiness.

Some have argued that the time spent watching television is time not spent doing other things. For some people this is time that might have been spent enriching personal relationships, playing games with friends or family, or thinking over the day's events. Multiple television sets in each home may intensify the splitting of the family by encouraging members to watch different shows in different rooms.

From game shows and sitcoms to "The Journal" on CBC, television encompasses an enormous range. It can inspire and edify, but it can also diminish and trivialize. It entertains, baby-sits, models behaviour, transmits values and attitudes, and sets consumer and lifestyle patterns.



INTRODUCING PRIME-TIME TELEVISION INTO THE CLASSROOM

According to an American study, students will have watched 15 000 hours of television by the time they have graduated from Grade 12, compared with 11 000 hours logged in the classroom. Television has been described by educator Neil Postman as "the first curriculum". Its pervasiveness and immediacy make it basic to any media-literacy program.

Central to the success of the classroom treatment of television is the attitude and resourcefulness of the teacher. The following suggestions are designed to help set a tone that is conducive to the study of television and to the development of a point of view on the medium.

- A mediated response is the foundation of television literacy. It is through discussion and guided reflection that teachers and parents can help students to break the passive, one-way communication system and create an interactive relationship with the medium. By imparting to students the skills of media literacy, educators can help them correctly place their television experiences into their overall world view. Watching television wisely is an ideal for which all of us should strive.
- Before students begin their formal viewing of television, a convincing case can be made for enhancing their perception of the medium through exercises and games in non-verbal communication, still photography, and sound collages. They can thus become sensitized to body language, signs, symbols, and various cultural codes. For more information on this approach, see *Teaching About Television* by Len Masterman (Toronto: Gage, 1983).
- Our models for television genres and cultural values are primarily American. They do not necessarily reflect Canadian identity and traditions. Teachers have an obligation to be aware of the Canadian perspective.
- To keep up to date on television, it is necessary to watch television. One need see a program series only a few times, however, to grasp its basic formula. What is essential is that teachers approach television with flexibility and an open mind. While there are some good texts and resource books available, it is more often necessary to exploit the teachable moment through some recent event, a new television series, or some phenomenon where youth and media culture intersect, such as the hyping of a rock superstar.

- Because commercial television is a craft as well as a business and it constructs a view of the world that is full of powerful value messages, it is important for teachers to provide (depending on the age and level of perception of the students) as many contexts as possible for discussion. These will include historical, artistic, economic, and sociological outlooks (see "Key Concepts" on pp. 8-10 of this document) or any other technique that helps to unravel the many threads of our popular culture. Teachers should discuss all of these fundamental and interrelated components of the medium; otherwise, students may fail to make many of the important connections.
- Media literacy works best when students can be creative with the media. Working with super-8 mm, the new lightweight video cameras, or a television mini-studio can provide invaluable insights into how a television program is shaped. If none of these is available, teachers can arrange for a tour of a local cable-television station.
- The teacher's personal library or the school's library resource centre should contain some of the recent books and periodicals on television. In addition, clippings from such sources as *Time* magazine, the *Globe and Mail*, and the *Toronto Star* will provide information about current trends. There are also several useful publications, such as *Cultural Information Service*, that provide advance information on upcoming programs from the American networks. (*Cultural Information Service*, P.O. Box 786, Madison Square Station, New York, N.Y. 10159)
- Before beginning a study of television, it is important to have parental support, especially since the study of television may be considered a frivolous activity. Once parents understand the objectives of media literacy, however, they are usually supportive.
- The teacher should begin the study of television with a survey of students' viewing habits, compiling a list of the most frequently watched programs and students' own reasons for watching them. Throughout their study of television, students should be encouraged to keep a television log or journal in which they record their reactions to the programs they watch. Because there is such a wide range of individual responses to television, this can be an invaluable resource to the teacher in charting students' perceptions and development of media-literacy skills.

The teacher can begin with any one of the four units that follow, although it would be best to start with a combination of activities from both "Television's Construction of Reality" (pp. 33-41) and "Decoding Activities" (pp. 42-51).

TELEVISION'S CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY

Television presents a version of reality that has been carefully constructed. Programs depend on a wide range of sophisticated elements – special codes and conventions – that communicate effectively with an audience. An understanding of the artificiality of such constructs, which are basic to the art of television presentations, helps students gain a realistic perspective on the nature of television.

The introductory activities in this unit are designed as a sequence that will probe the difference between the television world and students' real-life experience. Starting with the images of the family, students can explore the stereotyping and the various models that are characteristic of television.

TELEVISION CHARACTERS

1. Have students select one of their favourite television characters and then answer the following questions: Have you ever known anyone like that character? Is it possible for such a person to exist in real life? Explain.
2. Students can role-play their favourite characters in class to see how they would get along.
3. Ask students to write a short story or play that describes a visit by one of their favourite characters to the classroom or to their home.

TELEVISION FAMILIES

The following activities deal with the ways in which families are portrayed on television. They encourage students to compare real-life families with television families.

1. Have students list the titles of some of the television programs that portray families. It might be useful for them to make a chart of their findings. Ask them to compare the behaviours of the various members of television families with the behaviours of people in real life. They can use role playing to show ways in which these people (a) treat each other in conflict situations and (b) interact with each other in non-crisis situations. Students can compare these television scenes with real-life behaviours, as shown through further role playing or discussion. They can then discuss the ways the parents on the show are portrayed, using questions like the following as a starting point: How do they compare with your parents or those of your friends? Is there a character whom you admire in one of these shows? Why do you admire him/her? Have you wanted to alter anything in your life because of what you have seen on one of these shows? If so, what?

   There may be additional questions and issues that the class can generate. After the class has finished its discussion or interviews, students should summarize their observations. The next exercise will help to dramatize the differences between their own families and those on television.

2. Ask students to pretend that their family could imitate a television family for twenty-four hours. Ask them the following questions: What are some of the things your family would do? How would the new life differ from the way your family lives now? How would the actions and behaviours of the members of your family be the same?

3. Working in groups of five or six, students can perform a short scene from a television show that normally portrays families in situations that are not like real life. They can then perform the same scene realistically.

4. Working in small groups, students can invent a new television show about a family – a program that would appeal to many of the families they know. Ask them to consider the following points: members of the family (e.g., ages, sexes, names, occupations, appearances); length of the program; day and time of airing; sponsors; introduction or opening teaser; story or plot line for the first episode or "pilot"; a list of stars.

5. We tend to take for granted television's pervasive presence. This exercise is designed to help students gain some critical distance from their popular culture and their television world. Ask students to choose one or more popular television shows, look at the show(s) through the eyes of a make-believe extraterrestrial visitor, and draw on paper or list the impressions of our culture that the visitor would receive. Students may want to consider the following: the image of the typical man and woman, the images of children and teenagers, the ways people spend their leisure time. Ask them whether these impressions accurately depict our culture and if they think the visitor would want to move to earth or return home after watching such programs.

TELEVISION FANTASY AND REALITY

The above activities, based on the familiar world of the family, were designed to help students distinguish real-life experience from the constructed views of television. The following activities both summarize and extend this perspective.

1. a) Ask students to list the groups or individuals who are currently featured on television (e.g., the police, private detectives, teachers, doctors, nurses, teenagers, widows, single parents).
   b) Divide the class into groups and have each one choose a suitable television group or individual to study.
   c) Have students use a chart like the following to compare television images with their real-life experiences and try to offer explanations for the discrepancy between them.

Subject(s)	**TV Image**	**Real Life**	**Explanation**
Police	pursuit of criminals in fast chases	routine tasks (e.g., speeding tickets)	We prefer to see the glamorous and the exciting to the commonplace.

THE ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

d) After students share their findings, ask them to respond to the following provocative questions:

  - Do we want to make law enforcement glamorous in order to convince ourselves that goodness and justice always win and crimes can be solved within thirty or sixty minutes?
  - Are we not entitled to a bit of escapism for a few hours each week?
  - Isn't it exciting to see young people, preferably beautiful, acting out things we wish we could do but can't?
  - Television personality Dick Cavett made the following comment: "Television programmers claim that they are giving us what we want, while in fact we are simply getting what they give us." Discuss the distinction. What would happen if the programmer gradually brought more realism into programs, used fewer beautiful people, and gave us ambiguous endings in which conflicts were not necessarily resolved? Would the TV ratings tumble? Would there be riots in the streets? Would your family tolerate it? Would people eventually come to see television as a medium to learn about real life rather than as something that stresses escapism?

2. Jerzy Kosinski's surreal satiric novel *Being There* (New York: Bantam, 1972) is the portrait of Chance, a man who knows no other world than that of television. When he finally enters the real world, he becomes an instant media celebrity and a possible candidate for the United States presidency. Senior students could read the novel, focusing on its satire of media celebrities, and discuss the following quotations from the book in terms of the issues they raise:

   - *The way television consumes instant celebrities:* "Facing the cameras and the audience, Chance was drained of thought, engaged, yet removed. The cameras were licking up the image of his body, were recording his every movement and noiselessly hurling them into millions of screens scattered throughout the world. He would be seen by more people than he could ever meet in his entire life." (p. 53)
   - *The notion of merging personal identity with television personalities:* "By changing the channel, he could change himself." (p. 5)
   - *The phenomenon of television narcissism:* "Of all the manifold things there were in all the world – trees, grass, flowers, telephones, radios, elevators – only TV constantly held up a mirror to its own neither solid nor fluid face." (p. 53)

3. Research suggests that television can influence many of our fundamental social dispositions. Average viewers see 300 screen characters a week in prime time. They are portrayed in apparent realism but bear little relation to the viewers' actual world. In 1985 viewers saw 30 police officers, 7 lawyers, 3 judges, 12 nurses, and 10 doctors a week, but only 1 engineer and 1 scientist. Men outnumber women on television three to one. The popular male age range is from twenty-five to fifty-five, but for women it is from twenty-five to thirty-five.

Try to update these statistics to see if there are any substantial changes. Have students use the inquiry model in small groups as a means of posing problems related to the statistics, which they can then discuss or resolve. (See pp. 14-15 of this document.) After each group has presented its completed inquiry model, the class could suggest a series of topics for more detailed research.

4. It may be understandable that producers and scriptwriters succumb to the temptation of using easily recognized stereotypes to advance the plot or to provide an easy laugh for an audience. But the constant exploitation of ethnic, sexual, and other forms of stereotyping is a continuing cause for concern in our society.
   a) Ask students to list a variety of examples of people for whom there are stereotyped television versions (e.g., doctors, teachers, teenagers, punkers, Blacks, Orientals, Arabs, the elderly). Students can then consider the following questions: What are the Canadian stereotypes? What harm is created through stereotypical portrayals? How would you change the situation? What programs have characters who rise above the limitations of stereotypes?
   b) Have students write and perform a ten-minute play that is filled with stereotypes. Using the same plot, they can then rewrite the play without using stereotypes.

5. Sometimes television characters do fantastic things, like jumping long distances or being in explosions without being hurt. Ask students to research several kinds of special effects (e.g., stunting, cheating, squibs, pyrotechnics, breakaway furniture, candy bottles, models, chroma key) to find out how each is executed. Note that several movies and tapes are available that describe the methods of creating special effects.

6. Ask students to consider the reasons for the use of special effects in television shows. They might be asked the following questions: Why do some shows use more special effects than others? How might special effects make some programs more popular? Why would special effects appeal more to younger than to older viewers? Note that the elementary school text *Getting the Most Out of TV* by Dorothy and Jerome Singer (Toronto: Gage, 1981) has a good section on this topic.

TELEVISION NARRATIVE AND LITERARY NARRATIVE

Because language arts teachers may teach the short story, it is natural for them to investigate the rich potential of television narrative and to look at the special problems in television storytelling. For example, television shows need to provide a framework for the insertion of commercials. To do this, writers develop the plot so that stories "peak" several times. It is at these points that commercials are inserted, and there will be a higher number of jolts per minute in the program just before the commercial break.

1. a) Review with students the terms that are used to describe the different sections and functions in a story – introduction, complication, rising action, turning point, climax, and dénouement. Construct a plot graph of a traditional short story that has plenty of action and suspense.

   b) Note that there are two kinds of television narrative. The first is like the traditional short story and follows a predictable linear pattern. The other follows a more fragmented format, in which the narrative is arranged into several seemingly unrelated plots and subplots (e.g., "Barney Miller", "Hill Street Blues"). (The novels of Charles Dickens use this second approach.) Students should be asked to look for suitable examples of both kinds and to make plot graphs for each.

2. Ask students to identify the differences between television narrative and literary narrative. (If it is possible to obtain copies of television scripts, the class will be able to focus on this assignment more readily.)

3. Have students learn the proper format for television script writing and then adapt all or a part of a scene (e.g., the climax) in a short story they are studying.

4. Some television series, such as "Little House on the Prairie", are based on a novel or story. Have students compare a television program with the printed form, considering such aspects as characters, plot, setting, and theme.

5. Students are so accustomed to following American television models that it is important that teachers consider Canadian television's potential for developing worthwhile television narratives. Students could design a pilot for a Canadian dramatic series that would be as good as the best American television narrative but would have a distinctive Canadian tone. In developing the pilot, they should consider the following: typical characters, conflicts and resolutions, arrangements of segments, use of Canadian settings, and the casting of current leading Canadian actors.

AUDIENCE INFLUENCE

1. a) Find out which sitcoms are taped before a live audience and which are not. Ask students to watch a situation comedy performed before a live audience and describe the mood of the show and the performance of the actors.

   b) Ask students to watch a situation comedy performed without a live audience and assess the quality of the performance. How much do they think the taping before a live audience had to do with the different experiences?

2. Much of the laughter heard on television comedy is from a prerecorded laugh track. Ask students why producers use this device. To what extent do students feel that they are being manipulated by this technique? Have students assess the impact of playing one minute of a laugh track from a sound-effects record while at the same time showing slides of people in normal activities.

TELEVISION PERSONALITIES

1. The term *television personality* refers to anyone who becomes well known through being seen extensively on television. Have students list ten television personalities and assess the qualities that make these people attractive to a television audience. Having established some suitable criteria, they can then rank the ten people in order from those whose personalities and images are best suited to those who are least suited to the medium of television.

2. Have students consider people in the class, school, and community and determine which ones have the qualities that might make them successful television personalities.

3. Have students role-play a television personality. Ask them to describe their new lifestyle, the good and bad aspects of their job, and how they developed and refined their attractive qualities. (They might research how well-known television personalities such as talk-show hosts developed their techniques and learned to enhance their images.)

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Have secondary school students write recommendations for an afternoon and evening's television fare for younger students. Remind them that this assignment is intended to help the younger students choose the programs they will most enjoy.

2. Ask students to draw a picture of a scene or a character from a television program and see whether their classmates can guess which program they are trying to represent. Students can consider the following questions: What are the clues in your picture that identify the program? What other programs might your picture represent? Why?

3. Some parents limit their younger children's viewing to five or six hours per week but do not restrict older children's viewing. Some parents discuss with their children the content of programs to be viewed, as written up in a weekly listing, and decide with them the shows they will watch. Ask students to make up (a) a list of rules that parents might use in making these decisions and (b) a list of recommendations for parents to follow when they are trying to work out some decisions about their family's viewing. The following is a short, worthwhile book on this topic: *Television and Your Children* (Toronto: TVOntario, 1985).

4. Have students write a letter to a younger child in which they recommend a particular television program. They should tell this child about the story line, setting, characters, and other pertinent information such as the day and time that the program is aired. Remind students to remember to think about the possible bedtime of the child. (Some suitable programs might be broadcast too late for a younger child.)

5. Have students interview people who grew up without television and remember getting their first television sets. Students can use questions like the following in their interviews: How did your life change after you got a television set? What were programs like then? How do you feel about watching television now? How was your childhood different from mine? Ask students what, if anything, they find appealing about the childhood experiences of the people they interviewed.

6. In groups, students can role-play several scenes in the lives of a family whose members have agreed to watch no television for a month. The scenes might include the following: the end of the first day; the end of the first week; the family council that will decide whether or not to return to regular viewing; the first moments of the return to viewing; neighbours talking about the abstaining family before, during, or after its abstention. Note that this activity can be a good stimulus for writing. Students can also research formal studies or magazine and newspaper reports on families that have tried to eliminate television from their lives.

7. Most cable-television companies will arrange a class tour of their facilities. After the tour, ask students to watch a show at home that was produced at the studio to see if the tour changed their perception of how a television production shapes a show's message. If it did, ask them to describe the changes.

8. Proposals have been made to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) for a separate channel for television programs by, for, and about young Canadians. Ask students to consider what might be wrong with television and to make concrete proposals for programming that they would be keen to watch. Students should work in small groups to come up with program proposals that will meet their needs. (Caution them that their ideas are to be youth-oriented and that they should not duplicate anything that is already available on prime-time television or on TVOntario.)

9. If students have had several weeks or more of media-literacy activities, it would be profitable to determine how their study has influenced the way they watch television and films. In a written or an oral survey, ask them questions such as the following:
   - Are you watching as much television as before? Are you watching a greater variety of programs?
   - Do you watch television differently? Be specific. Which programs do you now look at differently?
   - If you had the power, what would you do now to change television?
   - Describe any effects that your television studies have had on your family and friends.

10. Neil Postman, an author and educator, has been critical of television. The following quotation is taken from his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (New York: Viking, 1985):

    > Television has made entertainment the natural format for the representation of experience. . . . The problem is not that television presents us with entertaining subject matter but that all subject matter is presented as entertaining. It serves us most ill when it co-opts serious modes of discourse – news, politics, science, education, commerce, religion – and turns them into entertainment packages [p. 87].

    Have students discuss the implications of this quotation in terms of the following:
   - students' judging teachers on the basis of their ability to entertain a class
   - the challenge to politicians of trying to debate serious issues during election campaigns
   - the efforts to make educational television programs about abstract areas or ideas that, according to Postman, cannot be translated into television programs (Postman contends that some programs on philosophy, science, or political issues, for example, may transform this material into entertainment but deceive us into thinking that we are receiving the real essence of these subjects.)

DECODING ACTIVITIES

THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION

Television language is made up of a set of elements – picture, sound, and movement – that can be identified and appreciated. Teachers should use an experiential approach to the special language of television to encourage students to acquire decoding skills, thus increasing their sensitivity to television language and its manipulative effects. To introduce the subject, teachers can:

- use role-playing and simulation techniques to introduce the language of television;
- show a television program that reveals a good variety of shots, angles, and transitions and, working inductively, discuss with students the effects that such techniques achieve;
- introduce the "magic moments" exercise (see activity 2 on page 79);
- have students use proper script form and write a storyboard and script for a television commercial or a short television drama;
- have students write some television reviews or present an oral report on a variety of shows.

Like all languages, television has its own "grammar", which helps to structure the message and thereby give it impact and meaning. In television, this structure can be broken down into the following: camera shots and angles, lighting, sound, special effects, and pacing. (See the "Glossary of Camera and Shooting Terms" on page 77 of this guide.)

The activities in TVOntario's monograph *Let's Play TV in the Classroom* by Jack Livesley and Lynne Hyne (Toronto: TVOntario, 1980), a publication that is free to teachers, are ideally suited to immersing a class in television language without having to use equipment. Suggestions include encouraging students to make a frame with their hands to simulate a television camera and to televise fellow students in suitable poses. Through these various frames and movements, using either their hands or a cardboard frame, students are able to see the effect of a variety of shots, angles, and other techniques. These exercises culminate in storyboarding exercises. If the teacher has access to a video camera or a television mini-studio, the class could do these exercises using both the television equipment and the simulations.

Students can now examine television language by watching a variety of television programs. Activities such as the following can be used for this purpose.

1. Select a scene of a narrative that has plenty of action and suspense. Ask students to note the use of dialogue, number of shots, sound effects and music, and camera movement. The class discussion can then focus on those elements of which students were unaware and the possible reasons for this. Students may then list the ways in which these elements contribute to their enjoyment or understanding of the scene.

2. In order to help students observe the variety of production techniques, have them watch a dramatic sequence from a variety of programs representing several genres (e.g., action-adventure, sitcoms, soap opera). The elements to be observed include the type of shots used, the way in which the composition of the shots contributes to the moods, and the effect of the editing (whether it is fast- or slow-paced).

3. A storyboard is a series of sketches showing the action sequence of a production. It helps those involved in the production to visualize the scene. Each frame represents a change in camera shot. In a television script, the video portion listing shots, transitions, and special effects appears on the left and the audio on the right. (See the accompanying examples.) Note that dialogue is written in lower case, while all other material appears in capitals. New scene locations and visual instructions such as *fade in* or *dissolve to* are underlined as well as capitalized.

   a) Have students choose one television sequence and record it in proper storyboard form.

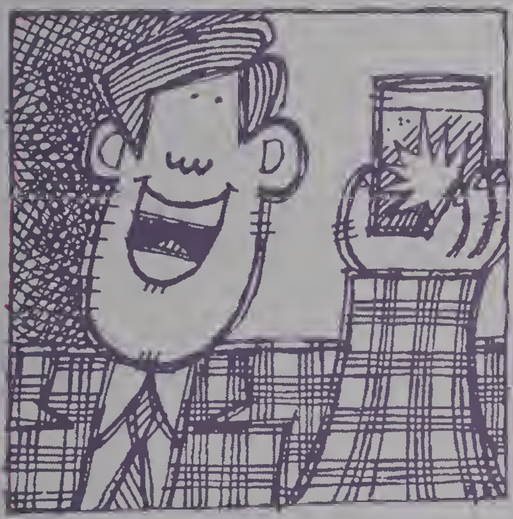
   b) Have students write a storyboard and a script for a one-minute commercial or a sequence in an action or adventure story that does not depend on a great deal of dialogue. They can then compare their storyboards with their scripts. (Showing an overhead projectual of several such storyboards would assist in the comparison.)

   c) If the class has access to television equipment, students could videotape several of their scripts.

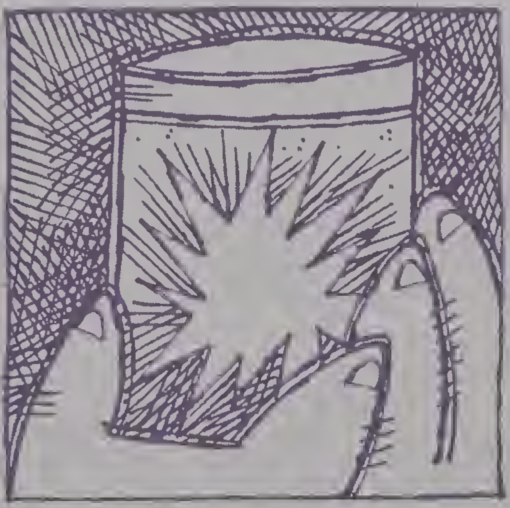
Sample Storyboard ("Sell That Prop")

Video

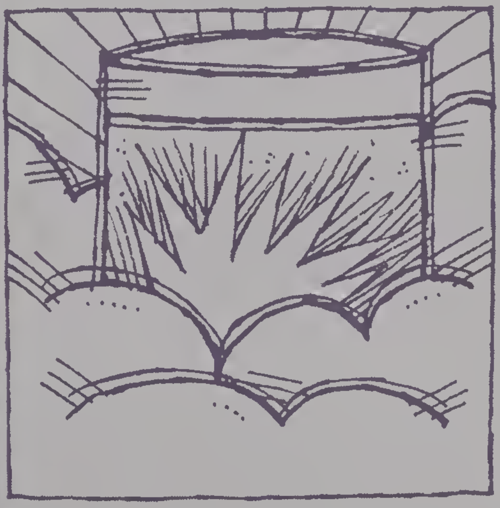
Shot 1: LS (establishing long shot)



Shot 2: CU (close-up)



Shot 3: MS (medium two-shot)



Audio

Dialogue and other sounds
Salesman introduces self and product: "Hi, etc."

Dialogue and other sounds
Salesman's VO (voice-over): "Buy this and it will make your trouble disappear."

Dialogue and other sounds
None
(Good shots often tell whole story.)

Sample Television Script

("Program 1 - Matter", The Science Alliance)

Video	**Audio**
Shot: REX AND JUDY JUDY ON CAMERA 16 MS – JUDY RIGHT FRAME	JUDY OC: The answer to Bryant's riddle, something to do with the subject of our program ... matter.
SUPER "MATTER" OVER JUDY	
DISSOLVE TO 17 WATERFALL – FULL FRAME SUPER "LIQUID"	REX VO: Matter can be a liquid like water ...
SPLIT SCREEN – TWO-WAY SPLIT WATERFALL – LEFT FRAME	
18 MILK – RIGHT FRAME	or milk ...
SPLIT SCREEN – THREE-WAY SPLIT WATERFALL – LEFT FRAME MILK – LOWER-RIGHT FRAME	
19 GRAPE JUICE – UPPER-RIGHT FRAME	or grape juice.
DISSOLVE TO 20 BALLOONS – FULL FRAME WITH SUPER "GAS"	JUDY VO: Matter can be a gas like helium in a balloon ...
SPLIT SCREEN – TWO-WAY SPLIT BALLOONS – LEFT FRAME	
21 SKY AND CLOUDS – RIGHT FRAME	or the air all around us ...
SPLIT SCREEN – THREE-WAY SPLIT BALLOONS – LEFT FRAME SKY AND CLOUDS – LOWER RIGHT	
22 INNER TUBE, TIRE – UPPER RIGHT	or the air in a tire.
DISSOLVE TO 23 BUILDINGS – FULL FRAME SUPER "SOLID"	REX VO: Or matter can be solid like buildings and trees ...
SPLIT SCREEN – TWO-WAY SPLIT BUILDINGS – LEFT FRAME	

JOLTS PER MINUTE: THE FIRST LAW OF COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

Jolts is a term commonly used in the television industry to refer to moments of excitement generated by a laugh, a violent act, movement by people or objects within the frame, high decibels in the soundtrack, or rapid cutting. Script writers are often urged to put in more jolts, especially at points where the pace is slackening. In his book *Jolts: The TV Wasteland and the Canadian Oasis* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1985) Canadian critic Morris Wolfe states as the first law of commercial television: "Thou shalt give them enough jolts per minute or thou shalt lose them" (p. 14). Students of all ages can benefit from studying the applications of this principle.

1. Have students select one Canadian and one American sitcom or one Canadian and one American drama. They should (a) record the number of jolts per minute that occur in one scene from each, (b) consider the importance of the jolts in making the program exciting and popular, and (c) compare the jolts per minute in the Canadian and American programs. Morris Wolfe contends that the American shows will have far more jolts per minute than Canadian shows. Do the data that students find substantiate his claim? To what extent do they think that the difference could be interpreted as the contrast between American and Canadian culture? Students could also debate the use of jolts per minute. (To what extent is this phenomenon an asset or a liability?)

2. Students can watch several commercials and record the jolts per minute in each. They can then compare this number with those calculated for the programs in which they appear and answer questions like the following: Which has more jolts per minute – the commercial or the program? Do some products seem to be advertised with more jolts per minute than others? Which products are advertised with the smallest number of jolts per minute?

3. Have students count the number of shots in a particular commercial or scene. (The average length of a shot in North American television is 3.8 seconds.) Are there more or fewer than they expected? Have them consider the effect of having more shots in the same amount of time and the effect of having fewer.

4. Some British drama uses longer shots and a more leisurely pace than do North American programs. Discuss with students examples from current series. How do they respond to the slower pace? To what extent do they find it boring?

5. An examination of the beginning of a television series show is an excellent way to observe how producers hook an audience. Opening teasers also convey key information about a show's style and its themes. Have students watch several commercials and the openings of several television shows. They should record the length and types of shots (e.g., camera angles, camera movement, close-ups, the use of jolts per minute) and consider the effects of the length and types of shots in creating excitement for the products and programs. They can then answer the following questions: How does the opening teaser convey the style and themes of the show? How are the commercials and the beginnings of the shows similar? How are they different?

SOUND-TRACK MUSIC

These activities are intended to create an awareness of music as an integral part of television communication. Students will also be able to see the effects that are possible through different musical instruments, rhythms, and volume levels. Students' sensitivity to mood and creativity can also be encouraged by having them match music to situations.

1. Play selections from sound-track records and have students list the television situations that the music could enhance. (Check local record stores or libraries for current favourites.) They should state the reasons for their choices.

2. Television creators take great care when they choose title and background music. Have students examine two commercials or programs and describe how the music is used to create a feeling in the viewer. Which commercial or program do they find more effective? Why?

3. Ask students to make a list of five typical television situations and match them with the types of music and instruments that would best support the moods they are trying to communicate.

4. Have students watch their two favourite shows, noting the uses of music in each, and then answer the following questions: Which is more effective? Why? How much of the enjoyment of these shows is derived from the music?

5. Present a video to the class without sound and ask students to suggest the most appropriate music with which to back it. Play a variety of possible musical selections from sound-track recordings while reviewing the video. Ask students which work best and why.

6. Present a video to the class with the sound turned off and ask students to pretend that they are the producer writing a letter to the composer. In their letters they should suggest the kinds of music they want to hear by describing the instruments, rhythm, and volume that should be used.

7. Ask students to find or suggest examples of music most suitable for four of the following types of shows: a current-affairs program, the news, a soap set in western Canada, a sports broadcast, a situation comedy, a police show, a game show, and a forum discussing the problems of young Canadians.

THE TELEVISING OF SPORTS: DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

All spectator sports involving competition contain inherent drama; all sports competitions are stylized wars and are structured in a manner to produce the maximum amount of suspense and excitement. Television has conditioned the way we look at sports through such inventions as instant replays, the dramatic use of close-ups, and even the use of giant screens in stadiums. Referring to these and other features, the class can discuss the strengths and weaknesses of televised sports before working on the following activities.

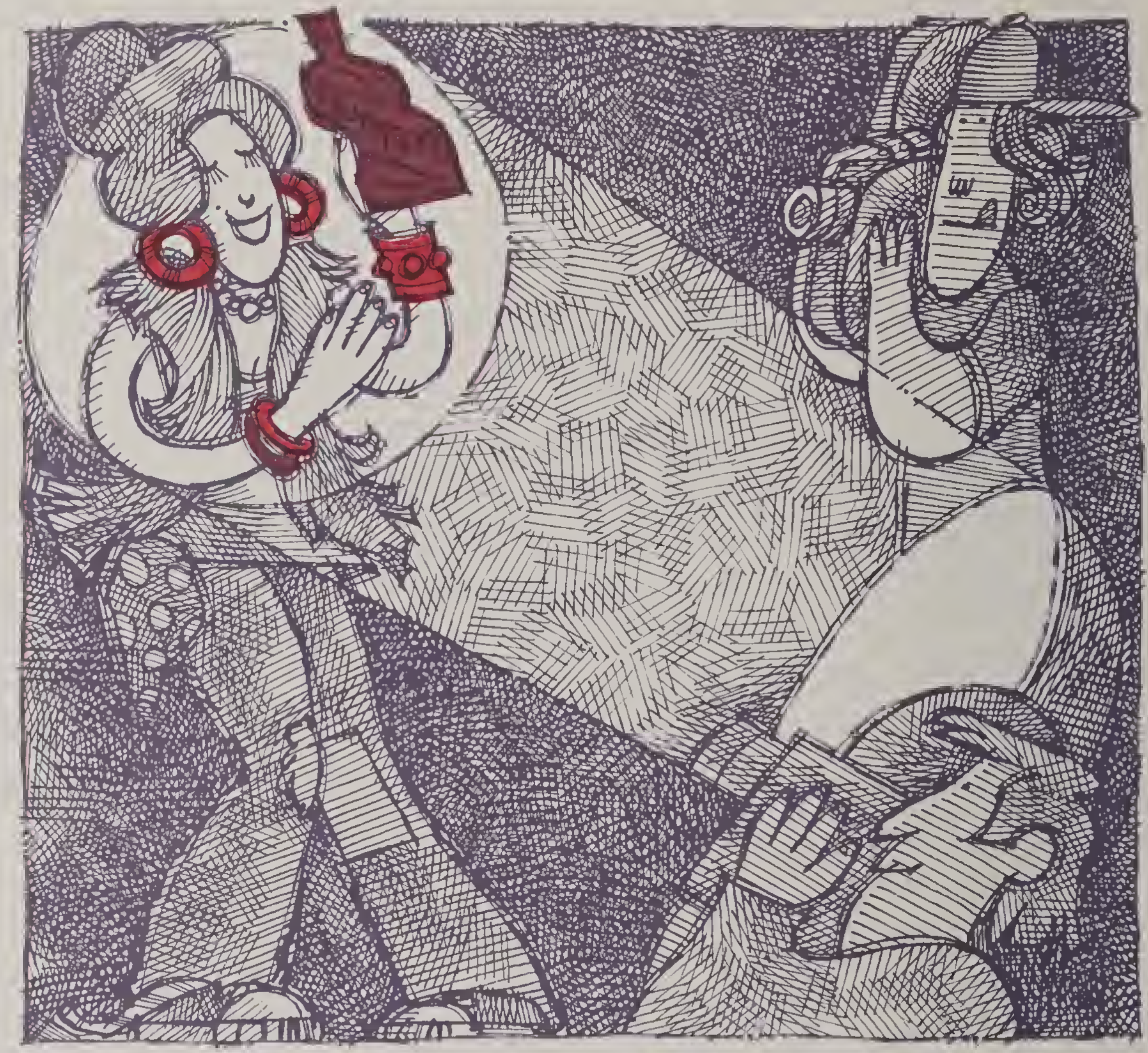
1. Have students choose three or four sports currently shown on television. They should draw a sketch of the playing field(s) and, after watching television presentations, indicate the positions of the cameras. Ask them to (a) consider the reasons for the specific camera placement and indicate how a change in camera placement would modify the way the game was presented and (b) consider how using more or fewer cameras would modify the presentation.

2. Students can watch a sports event on television without the sound and make up their own commentary for the event, deciding how many voices they will use. How would they use musical background? (What kind? Where? How often? Why?)

3. Have students transcribe a section of a sports commentary and read it onto an audiotape in a normal voice rather than the excited voice that everyone is used to hearing. They can then play the tape back and discuss the differences. (How important is an excited voice to the excitement of the game?) They can then rewrite or change other aspects of the sound track and rerecord it. For example, they could remove the "colour" commentary, cut or augment the crowd sounds, or make the sportscaster non-stereotypical – a woman, an elderly person, someone with an unusual voice, or someone who is unfamiliar with the game. The class can discuss the impact on the listener's experience of the event as a result of the various changes.

THE COMMERCIAL LOOK: TAMPERING WITH THE REAL THING

Lighting, special filters, the dynamic use of camera angles and close-ups, and skilful editing all contribute to the impact of commercials.



1. Discuss with students how some commercials show products in ways that make them look better than they really are. Find some examples of these commercials and discuss the techniques the producers have used to enhance the appearance of their products.

2. Commercials for children's toys provide ideal examples of these techniques. Ask students to bring in a toy, especially one with moving parts, for which they know the commercial. Discuss the differences between the advertised attributes of the toy and its real capabilities. (Where the discrepancy is considerable, consumers have been able to make a case in court about misleading advertising; see the Canadian Code of Advertising Standards on pp. 177-78.) Regarding advertising targeted to children, ask students to talk about the moral issues involved. For example, after all the television hype, do they feel disappointed with the look and performance of the toy? Should there be major restrictions placed on the content of advertising to children? See the film *The Six Billion Dollar Sell* (Visual Education Centre, 1976; 16 mm, colour, 15 min) for a good presentation on the topic.

3. Have students choose a product or invent one of their own and create a storyboard for a commercial, using some of the most effective television techniques to sell the product.

GOOD AND BAD CHARACTERS

Crime and adventure shows have always fascinated the public. The following student activities are designed to explore this area.

1. Ask students to name two crime or adventure programs that they watch regularly, describe the major characters in each, and list the similarities and differences in the personality traits of these characters.
2. Have students name good and bad characters from several programs and list the personality traits that make characters good and those that make them bad.
3. Ask students to consider the two shows they examined in activity 1 in terms of the techniques (e.g., camera angles, lighting, and sound track) that the director uses to make it easy for the audience to recognize the good and bad characters. Ask them which show does the better job of identifying them and why.
4. Discuss the following with the class: Are the good and bad characters mostly women? Men? Old? Young? From minority groups?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. **Television reviews.** Once students have learned to decode television, they can use their decoding skills to write a television review. Examples of reviews of some well-known television programs could be collected from such sources as newspapers and periodicals such as *Time* and *Maclean's*. As well, much of the material in the "Film" section on discussing and reviewing films can be adapted to this activity. However, there are some special points to consider in discussing and reviewing television programs:
   - Commercial television is geared to a mass audience, and ratings are important. Many programs are geared to a middle range in terms of complexity of plot, ideas, and style. Students should consider this in their evaluations.

- In discussing television narrative – the most popular form of program that students will discuss – it is important that teachers provide some guidance about the nature of television genres. (See pp. 52-64.) For example, in reviewing or discussing a sitcom, it would be important to look at a specific program in the context of the genre, paying attention to the special codes and conventions of sitcoms. How does this particular program compare with other sitcoms? Is it a spin-off? Does it adhere to a formula?

- Television directors recognize that television sets are relatively small and that the dynamic use of close-ups is essential. They are also aware of the pacing, such factors as jolts per minute, and the necessity of interruptions for commercials. All of these factors condition the structure of programs.

2. Have students invent their own television show and design a storyboard for the opening teaser. They should be prepared to explain how their design will create excitement and interest in the show.

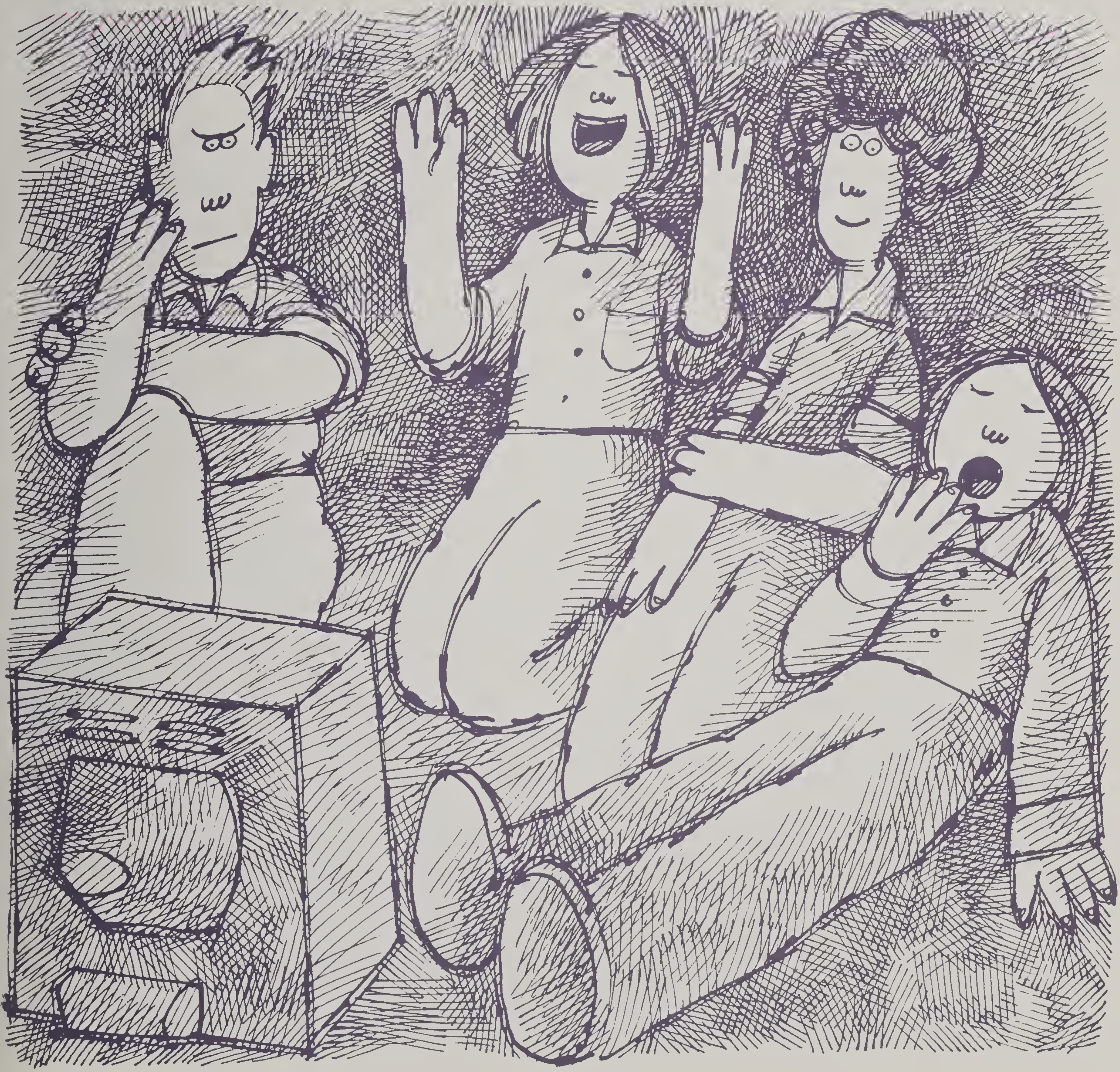
3. a) Have students watch a new television program or the pilot for a new series, list their general reactions, and note the program's strengths and weaknesses. Discuss with the class the elements that will make the program a hit or a flop. They should consider the similarities between the new show and current popular shows, whether it appears to be a direct copy of a current hit or a hit from the past, and to what extent it is a good imitation.

   b) In order for an American network show to be secure and stay on the air, it normally requires a viewing audience of twenty million people. Ask the class to predict how long the show will last. (Likely cancellation points are November, February, and June.) The class should then keep track of the show over the next several months to test the accuracy of its prediction.

4. In order to detect a coherent value system in a television program, students will have to pay attention to many details that they might normally take for granted. Determining ideology or beliefs and values is a challenging but important class activity leading to an understanding of our motivations for watching television. This activity will be best suited to secondary school students.

   a) Have students consider some of the following questions in relation to a specific television show: What is seen as constituting happiness? The good life? How does the show define virtue? Evil? Liberal or conservative viewpoints? How much does the show question the established order – both social and political? Is there an attitude to various social classes that emerges? In what ways is stereotyping used? When humour is used, who and what are its targets? Does the show take a point of view on current social trends?

b) After the class has done some pattern recognition and summarizing, it would be useful for students to discuss or write a set of coherent statements about the belief system of one or more television shows; these statements should then be assessed by the teacher. This assignment, which should be attempted only when students are ready for this kind of inquiry, is, nonetheless, one of the best summative critical-thinking and media-literacy exercises. For more information on this approach, consult *Between the Lines: How to Detect Bias and Propaganda in the News and Everyday Life* by Eleanor MacLean (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1981).



TYPES OF PROGRAMS

There are many genres of television program, from game shows to serious drama. There is something for everybody. Many of the programs for prime-time television are based on proven formulas. Once students have understood the techniques and formulas of these shows, they have the potential for becoming discriminating viewers. At the very least, they will have demystified the medium.

SITCOMS

1. Parke Levy, a television writer-producer, described situation comedies or sitcoms as follows: "a small hunk of life exaggerated for comic purposes. If you play it realistically, it comes out drama because very little in life itself is funny. People want a mirror held up to life, but at an angle so that it's humorous." Ask students to name their favourite sitcoms. What is the basis of their appeal? Discuss Parke Levy's quotation. In what ways do sitcoms hold up a mirror to life but at an angle? (The class should refer to several scenes from a variety of sitcoms for their answer.)

2. Most sitcoms can be reduced to a fairly simple formula; for example, father usually knows best ("The Cosby Show") and war is absurd and the crazy antics in a military hospital are survival strategies in a chaotic world ("Mash"). Working in small groups, students will look at several currently popular sitcoms and try to reduce each one to a basic formula or premise.

3. Stock characters recur in many sitcoms, and we usually have no trouble recognizing them. They include the sensible mother, the frustrated father, the big-mouthed bigot, the tough but tender hoodlum, and the cute or precocious take-charge kid. After the class has added to the list, ask students to devise a plot for an episode of a new sitcom in which there would be a variety of stock characters. Ask the class to write a few lines of dialogue that would be appropriate for at least five different stock characters.

4. In this activity students examine how comedic devices are used in situation comedies. As with many media-study assignments, this one will help students increase their awareness on several levels: their observation and analytical skills will be developed; their vocabulary will be enriched as they examine different types of humour; and they will become aware of the variety of taste among their classmates. The activities suggested may be done in their entirety for an extended unit or segmented by a teacher wanting a short exercise or an introduction to a different study.

a) Ask students to choose any three sitcoms and keep track of the types and frequency of jokes in two or three episodes of each. Some of the types of humour they might consider are visual, racial, and sexual (especially double-entendre). Some devices or styles include insult, slapstick, irony, puns, and one-liners.

b) Have students rank the shows according to their styles of humour and frequency of jokes. They should decide (i) which has the highest-quality jokes, (ii) which has the greatest variety of jokes, and (iii) which has the most jokes. Determine the favourite of the class and ask how much the nature of its jokes have influenced students' choice.

c) This assignment could also lead into writing assignments, in which students write their own scripts according to the formulas they have discovered or use an expository essay to describe their findings. The writing assignments could be further developed as live or taped performances of the scripts and oral presentations of the research material.

5. Students could write a pilot for a sitcom of their own. They should consider the personality of the stars who are to act in it, the typical language and the setting to be used, the tone of the show, and the issues to be raised. They should also include information on the desired time slot and the intended audience.

TALK SHOWS

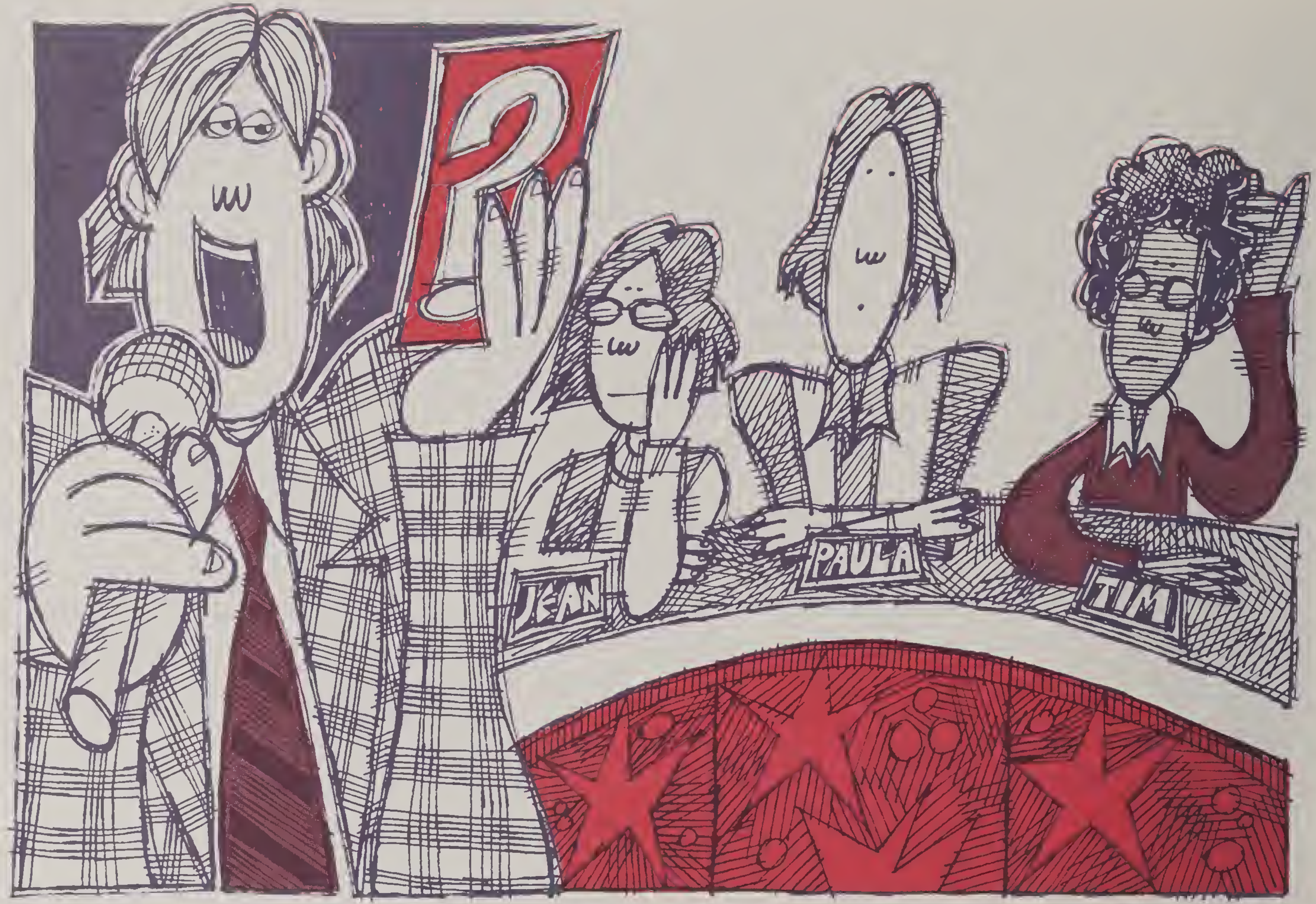
Talk shows have many sources of appeal: for example, they are relaxing, with their affable hosts/hostesses and guests, most of whom are show-business personalities; they allow viewers to learn the latest gossip and to feel intimate with favourite celebrities; and they provide a point of view on social, political, and pop-culture trends.

1. Students could compare several talk shows in terms of the special appeal of, and the audience for, the show and the qualities of the host/hostess and favourite guests. Those who are fans of a particular talk show should try to describe some of their favourite moments.

2. Have students simulate a television talk show in class and record it on videotape or audiotape. Encourage the student host/hostess to bring out the best from the selected guests. Ask students to what extent such an exercise provides insights into the talents of a professional talk-show host/hostess.

3. Students can watch and evaluate a talk show on a local community television station.

4. To date, there has never been a successful talk show in Canada. Have students debate the following: Canadians' lack of success in having a successful talk show can be explained by our inability to engage in talk-show trivia.



GAME SHOWS

The game show combines elements of both the sports event and the talk show. What is the basis of its appeal? How much of it is human greed, the "something for nothing" philosophy? How can these shows be analysed in terms of Western society's strong orientation to consumerism?

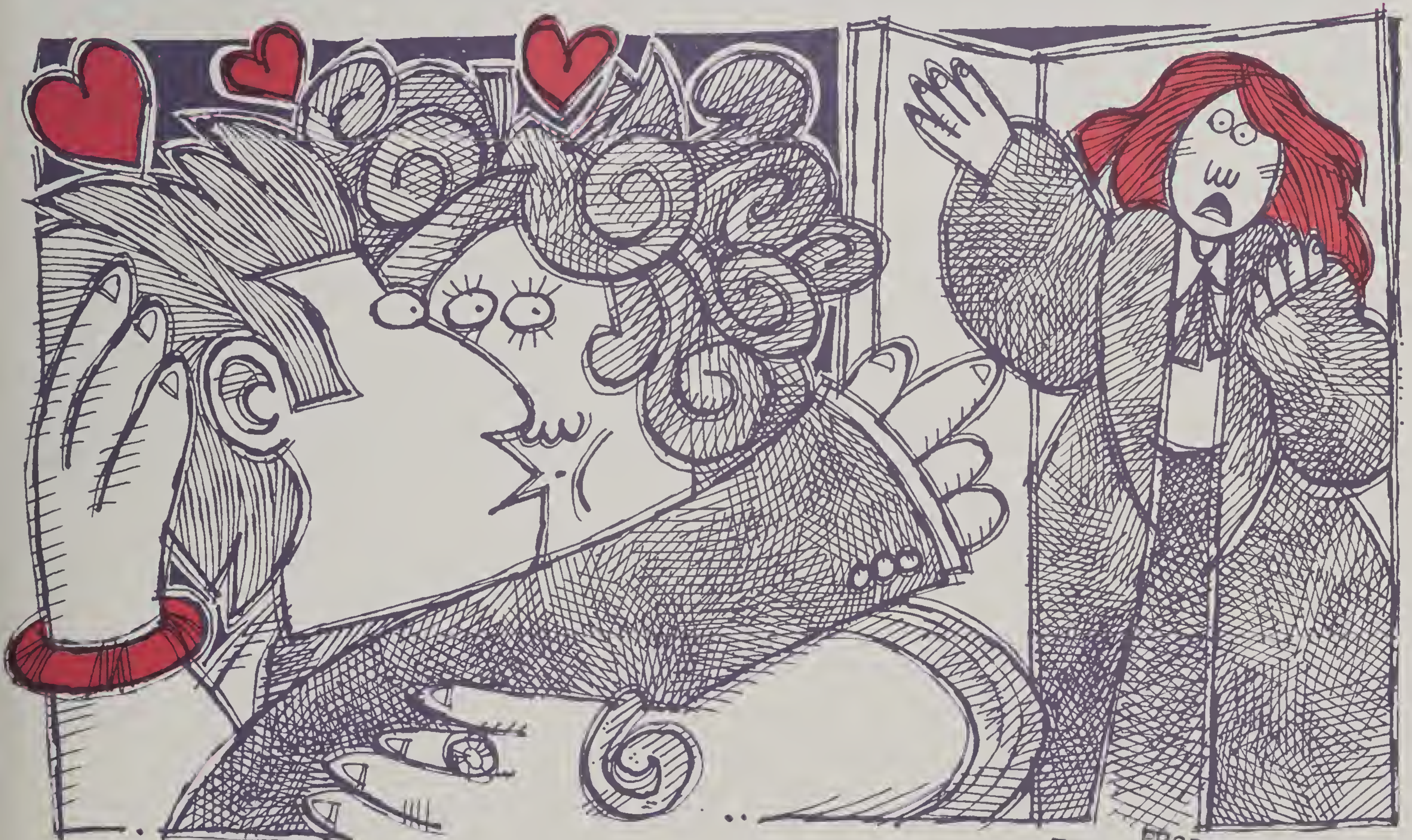
1. Have students design a game show that would have broad audience appeal but would depart from the usual format.
2. Have students research the production costs of game shows. Ask the following questions: How do these costs compare with the production costs of sitcoms or action dramas? Is it possible that it costs less to give away thousands of dollars on game shows than it would to hire actors, build sets, provide costumes, and shoot on location?

SOAPS

1. Soap operas have many loyal fans who follow religiously the ups and downs of the characters, who become a kind of extended family. Some commentators have found many socially redeeming values in the soaps. What accounts for the enormous popularity of a genre that is a weave of fantasy and reality? How does the material satisfy the inner needs of those who watch? The class could debate the pros and cons of the soaps.

2. There are numerous articles and books on soaps that students can use as a basis for research projects. The following are some patterns in soaps that can serve as discussion starters. They have been drawn from "The Soaps du Jour" by Walter Karp in *Channels Magazine*, July/August 1985, pages 37-38.

   - On prime-time television, actions count for nearly everything and feelings for very little. In soap opera, the reverse is true. What matters are the feelings that action arouses.
   - The soaps reveal a democracy of beauty, that is, almost everyone is good looking; even the sidekicks and underlings are handsome.
   - In soaps the one truly unpardonable sin is coldness of the heart.
   - Throughout soaps there is an unappeasable appetite for erotic romance.



PROPERTY OF
THE ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR
STUDIES IN EDUCATION

3. Some television soaps are considered to be more realistic than others. A realistic soap tries to present believable characters in typical situations so that the audience can identify with them and their problems. Characters in realistic soaps have the same types of occupations, concerns, problems, attitudes, and values as their viewers do. Have students name a realistic soap and describe the ways in which it is realistic. The following are some of the questions that students might be asked to deal with:

   - Do you think that realistic soaps are more or less attractive than unrealistic soaps?
   - What would draw some viewers to a realistic soap?
   - What would draw other viewers to one that emphasizes fantasy elements?

4. There are nighttime soaps and nighttime dramas. Have students list the qualities that make a soap different from a drama. Ask them to consider the following questions: Are there some dramas that are almost soaps? What keeps them from being soaps? Are there dramas that are "soapy" some nights and not others?

5. Do soap actors have special qualities that make them suitable for acting in soaps? Are there actors who would be terrible in soaps? Ask students to list the qualities that would distinguish a soap actor from an actor in a formal drama.

6. a) Have students select a popular drama and write an episode in appropriate soap style.

   b) Have them rewrite and perform a section of a favourite story as if it were a soap.

   c) Have them write a half-hour script for a soap about the lives of some Canadian teenagers.

VARIETY SHOWS

Even though variety shows are in general decline, they can still capture large audiences, mainly because they are fast-paced, lavish spectacles showcasing show-business stars. What variety shows have students enjoyed? What was the basis of their appeal? How much does the success of these shows depend on slick production values? Students could design a variety show, possibly with an all-Canadian cast; they should select a unifying theme and suggest a suitable host/hostess.

TELEVISION RITUAL AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Every year there are special events that receive elaborate media coverage and are especially suitable to television. In the 1980s these have included the annual Grey Cup and Superbowl sports spectaculars; beauty pageants; inaugurations of premiers, prime ministers, and presidents; visits by the Pope and royalty; royal weddings; and rock concerts such as Live Aid.

1. Discuss the following questions with students: How well does television cover these events? What are some other examples of such events? To what extent do you feel like a participant in these spectacles? Why do some people claim that the television coverage gives them the feeling of having an experience that is more real than if they were actually present at the event?

2. Choosing one or more of these events, students could examine them from the following perspectives:
    - how the publicity and media hype for these events maintained interest through extensive coverage before and during the event
    - how these events relate to the ways that ritual functions in our lives, namely, providing us with a sense of continuity, enhancing group solidarity, providing an occasion for the mystery and majesty that are part of human life
    - how the form of each of these events is rich in the elements of drama, myth, and artful design
    - how each of these events contains political and ideological messages

TELEVANGELISM

One of the major developments in recent years is the appearance of a group of dynamic religious leaders who are using the airwaves as an international pulpit to preach the gospel and to solicit funds. These leaders have been successful not only financially but in terms of serving as a political pressure group. In order to deal with this topic, students may discuss the ways in which these shows are structured like successful prime-time television shows, and how they borrow the formats of talk, game, and variety shows.

NATURE PROGRAMS

A favourite of many families, these programs delight their audience with a variety of wildlife that is filmed on location. Most of these programs, such as the National Geographic specials, are authentic and are carefully researched. What needs to be stressed, however, is that, as in any documentary, what we see is a construct of reality. There is a high ratio of film shot to that used. Some of these programs, like "Wild Kingdom", have been known to control the filming to the point that they have even staged unusual animal battles (such as one between a cougar and a wolf, a phenomenon that would not happen in reality). Students may deal with some or all of the following questions:

1. What aspects of nature programs do you like? What aspects of these programs do you disapprove of or find boring and repetitious?
2. Can you recall scenes or incidents from which you acquired information about wildlife that would not have been communicated as effectively if it had appeared in a book?
3. To what extent do these programs present primarily the cute, the cuddly, and the lovable?
4. In trying to appeal to large audiences, especially families, what aspects of wildlife behaviour might these shows be inclined to censor?
5. What influence do the following factors have on viewers: the selection of the host; the quality of the voice-over; the use of music; the overall narrative structure as well as the dramatic structuring of material in contrasting sequences (e.g., a scene with a baby monkey followed by one with a boa constrictor)?

CRIME DRAMAS

Crime dramas, along with sitcoms, are the most popular form of television narrative. The basic messages concern the dangers in the streets and the menace that surrounds us. These dramas show that we can trust in the powers of law enforcement to save us and keep the world safe.

1. With students, list the currently popular crime dramas on television. Into what categories do they fall? Through brainstorming with the class and referring to the opening observations as a discussion starter, arrive at the general formula operating in all crime dramas. Which ones follow the formula rigidly? Which ones depart from it?
2. Ask those students who are fans of specific shows to present their views on the appeal of their shows. Have them work in small groups to reduce the most popular shows to as precise a formula as possible.
3. To help students decode the value messages, assign them the material in activity 4 on pages 50-51.
4. Ask students how the following contribute to the special style of these shows: music, quick cuts, close-ups, complex editing, the use of stock phrases in the mouths of spies and thugs, the clever utterances of the investigators, the way the chase scene is filmed. What programs do students think may feature exceptions to these typical elements of style?

CHILDREN'S SHOWS

In discussions about television's powerful influence, "kidvid" is one of the most controversial topics. With the exception of some explicitly educational shows, children's shows sell products and send messages about what children should do in a consumer society. In short, children are being courted and cultivated for their buying power. But in spite of the strong commercial connection, many of these programs are inventive and exciting. It would be profitable for a class first to survey the categories of children's programs. The following are some of the most prominent: superheroes ("Spiderman", "The Hulk"), puppets ("Fraggle Rock", "The Muppets"), specials or full-length series ("Disney"), cartoons, kids as participants ("Kidsworld"), educational television ("Sesame Street", "Polka Dot Door").

1. Ask students how these programs project images of parents and self and convey attitudes and values.

2. Have secondary school students share their perceptions about the children's programs they once watched. Students should be encouraged to do research projects on the influence of television on children. What do they learn about the characteristics of the best programs? How do programmers take into consideration what is known about children's psychological needs? In what ways do they challenge children? (Note that TVOntario may provide teachers with information on the research and production of children's programs.)

THE NEWS – ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS

Television news programs are obliged to cram as many as twenty-five stories into a twenty-minute newscast. It is often difficult for the viewer to know if what has been selected for the newscast is really important and has been presented fairly and accurately. Students can watch a typical newscast and consider the following questions in relation to it:

- Are we receiving facts or opinions or both? If the latter, can we separate fact from opinion? Are there enough facts for us to understand the key issues that a news item raises?
- What is the ratio of national to international news?
- Are complex events watered down? (A television news item can be compared with the coverage of the same item in a newspaper.) Are the issues polarized for dramatic contrast?
- The criterion for how much time a story gets, or whether it appears at all, is not necessarily its relative importance in world affairs. Were there news items that were selected mainly because film footage was available or because these stories were considered sufficiently sensational?
- What is the effect of the image of the anchorperson on how we respond to the information?
- Is this a "happy talk" news program? This term refers to the effect of conversations between the anchorpersons, which trivializes even such items as disasters or international terrorism.
- The following quotations can serve as useful discussion starters.

> Television news promotes the status quo by directing our attention toward a daily series of diverting but unrelated events, and away from deeper social problems that might lead us to question or challenge the current system of doing things.
>
> Donna Woolfolk Cross, *Media Speak* (New York: Mentor Books, 1983), page 50

> The language of TV news is fragmented, patchwork, ahistorical. Viewers are not encouraged to make connections or form hypotheses. One story has no connection to the stories before or after it.
>
> Donna Woolfolk Cross, *Media Speak* (New York: Mentor Books, 1983), page 70

> Our reporters do not cover stories from their point of view. They are presenting them from nobody's point of view.
>
> Richard Salant, NBC vice-chairman, quoted in *Television Literacy: Critical Television Viewing Skills* (Boston: Hendron Press, 1981), page 130

For additional activities related to the news, see pages 214-20.

DOCUMENTARIES, PUBLIC-AFFAIRS SHOWS, AND DOCUDRAMAS

Documentary programs usually examine significant or interesting subjects in depth or probe current social or political problems. Canada has a long documentary tradition in film because of the outstanding work accomplished at the National Film Board. While a teacher could start with a film (consult the National Film Board catalogue), it might be better to ask students to view several programs (e.g., "The Journal", "The Fifth Estate", "W5", "60 Minutes", "20/20").

1. Ask students to show how the documentary has one or more of the following purposes: to provide relevant information presented with a particular point of view; to reinforce an existing attitude or the opposite – to subvert an existing attitude; to have the audience take some action.

2. A comparison between "The Fifth Estate" and "60 Minutes" is especially instructive in discussing the difference between the Canadian and the American approach to documentaries.

    a) "60 Minutes" is lavishly produced and carefully edited. Its executive producer calls the show "packaged reality". The program attempts to cover both sides of controversial stories. Ask students the following questions: How does the show make use of the following: dramatic reaction shots; the mythology of the good guy versus the bad guy; confrontational journalism in which the reporter confronts someone with incriminating evidence and the viewer watches as the person squirms. In what respects is the program derived from the formats of entertainment?

    b) "The Fifth Estate", by comparison with "60 Minutes", is more leisurely paced and generally provides more time with an individual interview. Furthermore, there is a useful follow-up discussion between the reporter hosts. Have students discuss the following: "The mandate of '60 Minutes' would appear to be to get as large an audience as possible and to make money with good pop journalism, whereas 'The Fifth Estate' is to tell Canadians about Canada" (Glenn Sarty, executive-producer, "The Fifth Estate").

    c) Ask students to watch two or more weeks of these two programs; to compare formats, interview styles, and editing; and to respond to the following questions: Which do you prefer and why? If "60 Minutes" is more entertaining, does that mean it is better? In public-affairs programs, what biases may be apparent in the choice of interviewer? In the camera angles? In the juxtaposition of sequences? In the use of a dramatic structure that builds to a climax? Evaluate the moral point of view of these programs. To what extent can they be described as staging moral crusades?

3. Have students design a format for a pilot of a new public-affairs program. They should consider the target audience, point of view, type of host, and typical stories that the program will cover.

4. Students can make a five-minute film or video on some local issue that would be suitable for documentary treatment.

5. Docudramas have become a regular phenomenon in each television season. Designated as television specials, they are accompanied by considerable publicity. Docudramas may recreate the life of someone famous (usually using a look-alike actor) or restage an important event. Examples include docudramas on American presidents such as John Kennedy and Richard Nixon and on film stars such as Marilyn Monroe and Grace Kelly, "Raid on Entebbe" about a hijack incident, and "The Terry Fox Story" about Terry Fox.

   a) Ask students to share their views on docudramas. Which ones have they liked and why? Which ones did they not find worthwhile and why? What are the inherent strengths and weaknesses of docudramas? What have students learned about prominent people or events through this form?

   b) Have students debate the following: Docudramas blend fact and fiction so closely that without prior research it is difficult to know the difference.

EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Educational or public television networks such as TVOntario and PBS provide an alternative to the information and entertainment of commercial television, which are always linked with economic determinants. Teachers can write to TVOntario's School Programming Department for materials to help students research the role of TVOntario in education, both in the context of schools and in the public sector.

1. Brainstorm with students about their views on educational television. What do they like and dislike? What programs used in school have especially impressed them?

2. Select some programs that are intended for home-viewing. (This is distinct from programs designed for classroom use, which usually presuppose the guidance of a teacher, who often has special curriculum materials available to aid in discussion.) Ask students to analyse how the producers of these programs revealed that they understood the principles behind effective television.

3. Divide the class into small groups. Have each group suggest an idea for a program on some aspect of a subject they are currently studying and then write a script.

THE VCR REVOLUTION

The advent of video-cassette recorders is substantially changing home-viewing habits. Besides renting or purchasing video movies, video exercise shows, and so on, viewers have the opportunity to "time-shift", that is, tape programs that they can watch later, at their convenience.

1. Ask students whose families own VCRs to comment on how their households are using this new technology. Does the VCR make them more media-literate viewers? What types of programs are being taped? Do their families rent movie cassettes? What are the advantages of being able to review favourite scenes from television and film? What is the potential of having an extensive video library? For those who have their own video cameras, to what extent will they be conditioned to imitate the style of prime-time television?
2. The following can serve as additional student-research or discussion topics:
    a) How do you think the fact that more and more people have VCRs will influence such areas as movie production? The programs produced for prime-time television? The production of specialty programs (e.g., how to improve your golf)?
    b) If people can skip over the ads on commercial-television shows that they have taped, how might VCRs affect the advertising industry?
    c) How might VCRs be linked with computers?

THE COMMERCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF TELEVISION

Most television presentations sell ideas or products to their audiences. In some cases, for example, the sale of automobiles or toothpaste, this may be done directly; in other cases, such as the sale of an attitude or a lifestyle, indirectly. An understanding of television not only as a marketplace for products but also as an arena for ideas helps students realize their place in the market and how their behaviour might be influenced. This section also examines some of the ways in which the marketplace influences television programming.

THE SELLING OF CEREAL

These activities are designed to encourage students to make important correlations between the world of the supermarket and the extensive advertising campaign aimed at persuading children to stay with a certain brand of cereal or switch to another. This activity will develop structured observation and research skills. (See the material on how to use the inquiry model on pp. 14-15 of this document.)

1. Ask students to stand quietly beside the breakfast-cereal section of a large supermarket and note the requests made by children as they help select a cereal. The following questions can be used to help students determine the influences that lie behind the children's preferences: What were some of the arguments they used for buying their favourite? Did many parents give in quickly? How many parents turned down the requests? What reasons did they give? How many people shopping with children selected less popular cereals or types not advertised on television? Ask students to examine the shelves to see how many cereals they have tried that are not advertised on television. To what extent do their results suggest that television advertising is effective for breakfast cereals?

2. Have students write and perform a short skit that illustrates the strong connection between television and the promotion of breakfast cereals. To suggest the television milieu, they could establish the skit in front of a television set, or with a child talking to a television set, or with three or four cereal boxes talking to each other.

3. Ask students to consider which cereals are directly connected to television by having their names taken from television characters. How important is this connection for the success of the sales of the cereals?

4. Have students invent a new cereal and relate it to an established television show or invent a character that could be used to symbolize the cereal in commercials. They should then design the package and the cereal's shape, size, colour, and flavour. They could also design a storyboard for a commercial and explain how the commercial would be effective in selling the cereal. Finally, they could try the idea out on several children to see whether they would be willing to buy their new product.

CHRISTMAS COMMERCIALISM

1. Discuss with the class when the Christmas selling season officially begins. Use questions such as the following: What types of products are highlighted before Christmas? What methods do advertisers employ to make Christmas an important time for all people and to encourage them to buy gifts?

2. The toy industry depends heavily on the Christmas season. Ask students what the current trends in children's toys are and to what extent these trends relate to social and political trends in our culture. Have students follow the advertising campaign for one or more toys. They can ask children for their views on the quality of the most popular toys and on the advertising associated with each. To what extent do the toys live up to the promises and the images of the commercials?

3. Christmas has many important emotional and ritualistic dimensions, from decorating the tree to serving the turkey and Christmas pudding. Discuss these important aspects with students and show how they are incorporated into Christmas commercials. Ask students to design a Christmas commercial that stresses the non-commercial aspects of the Christmas season. Would it work as well as those they have seen? Why or why not?

4. Ask students to consider other times of the year when seasonal commercials are shown. What are the types of products being advertised for each? Are the same selling techniques used for these other occasions?

DEMOGRAPHIC BEER

Parity products are those whose qualities differ very slightly from brand to brand. It does not matter greatly which is purchased, as all perform about the same. Parity products include gasoline, soft drinks, cigarettes, milk, and beer. The pervasiveness and popularity of beer commercials makes them ideal for studying parity products.

1. In order to sell the many brands of beer, advertisers have portioned out beer drinkers into demographic groups, or groups defined in terms of their age, sex, education, and income. After a careful look at many commercials, it is easy to see which beer is intended for each group. Have students watch several beer commercials and match the brands to the following stereotypes used by the advertisers to represent demographic groups:
   - the *young executive*, who is aggressive, sophisticated, and enjoys himself after work with friends at the pub
   - the *working man*, who wears rough clothes, enjoys the outdoors, is not afraid of hard work, and meets others of his kind at the pub
   - the *loner*, who does his job, but lives for the weekend. At the earliest opportunity, he heads hurriedly for cottage country to sit on his boat or porch.
   - the *sophisticate*, who frequents ordinary bars but drinks only a special beer, one so fine that he treats it as if it were champagne
   - the *party animal*, who loves the company of many noisy and attractive people and likes to carry on his frolicking while drinking a good beer
2. Have students make up additional categories and see if their friends can match them to the brands.
3. Ask students if they feel that beer advertising is aimed towards them as potential beer consumers in the future.
4. Ask students if there is a beer that is promoted for women. Why or why not? Ask them to devise a marketing strategy for a beer for the new, assertive woman. They should name it and design its label and bottle. They can then create a storyboard for a commercial for this beer and explain how it might attract its target group.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF PROGRAMMING

Programming refers to the type of programs shown and their placement in the schedule. Schedules are made up to please as many people as possible and to attract as many viewers as possible. Each network uses a variety of strategies to secure a maximum audience. Before beginning activities to help them understand ratings and the way in which networks schedule their programs, students should be familiar with the following terms:

audience flow The carry-over of an audience from one program to another on the same channel.

block programming The running of similar shows to hold the same audience as long as possible.

blunting A scheduling ruse designed to prevent a large audience from tuning into a competing network program by offering a similar program.

bridge A form of blunting whereby, for example, a network will schedule a big miniseries at 8:00 p.m. to offset a big movie due to start at 9:00 p.m. on another network.

counterprogramming Tackling a highly rated program on another network by scheduling a completely different program to deliver a different kind of audience.

hammock The time period between two successful programs, where a new show can be introduced and guaranteed a sizable audience.

prime time The time when there are more people watching television than at any other time of the day, that is, from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Mondays to Saturdays and from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Sundays.

rating The percentage of all homes with television that are tuned to a given program. Each rating point represents approximately 763 000 homes or almost two million people. Each rating point also represents about ten million dollars in advertising revenue each year.

share The percentage of all television sets in use that are tuned to a given program.

1. Distribute a regular series rating list from A.C. Nielsen. Once students understand the chart, have them work on the following questions:
   a) How many people watched the highest- and the lowest-rated programs? (The regular chart rates 100 programs.)
   b) Which network has the largest number of top-rated shows? Which has the lowest?
   c) Which shows in the top twenty-five do you like? Which ones do you dislike? How do you explain the popularity of the shows you dislike?

2. a) Make up a one-week schedule of prime-time listings from a television guide and distribute it to the class. Discuss how the strategies defined in the glossary above are evident in the programming patterns in the weekly listings. Note whether any additional tactics are being used.
   b) Divide the class into seven groups, with each group responsible for one night of the week. Assume that each group will have access to some new shows and some television film premières. Each group is to use appropriate network strategies, as outlined in the glossary, to juggle the schedule so that it can gain the highest ratings possible. After each group has presented its new schedule, there should be a debriefing session to assess the effectiveness of the proposed changes in programming.

3. Ask students to consider their views about a local station's programming and then write their opinions (both complimentary and critical) in a letter to the owner or operator of the station.

4. Ask students to examine the current week's television listings and to decide which channels are doing the best job of "delivering" and which are doing the worst.

5. Ask students to take charge of scheduling television programs for one channel for one day or one week. What changes would they make? Students should provide reasons to support their suggested changes. Do they think the overall ratings of the shows will increase with their schedule, or will the change increase one segment of the viewing audience while causing others to decrease?

6. There is considerable diversity in types of television programs. This exercise will help students learn about program categories and their placement in the schedule.
   a) Obtain multiple copies of a day's television listings. Divide the class into groups to investigate morning, afternoon, and evening programming. Have them consider the packaging to determine whether certain kinds of programs are broadcast at certain times of the day and try to find reasons for these groupings. Here is a partial list of program types: action/adventure, comedy, cooking shows, documentary/public-affairs shows, drama, evangelical shows, game shows, children's shows, miniseries, movies, music videos, news, soap operas, sports, talk shows, variety shows.
   b) Calculate the results and create bar or circle graphs to illustrate the trends.

7. The considerations for deciding what is usable news include the availability of visuals, the potentially sensational nature of a story, the station's quest for high ratings, and, in some instances, its concern for the right image. Have students discuss the order of presentation of three stories: the government has tabled a new budget, a large oil tanker is breaking up off the Newfoundland coast, and, locally, there has been an axe murder and suicide. There is taped footage of the Minister of Finance being applauded in the House of Commons, of sailors being scooped out of rough waters into Canadian Armed Forces' boats, and of blood on the walls and furniture while a relative cries in a policeman's arms.

8. Through the following simulation, students will experience the problems inherent in program selection and understand the commercial implications of the mass media. Students should research their positions well and, as in a debate, anticipate the arguments of the other presenters.

   Select six students and assign them the following roles:

PRODUCER #1.	You are from a successful production company that specializes in action/adventure shows. You are selling your new series entitled "All About Murder", a program that has a great deal of violence, for $400 000.
PRODUCER #2.	You are from a new company that has made its reputation on situation comedies. You are selling for $300 000 a new series entitled "Boomers", a family show that is all about a young family growing up in the suburbs.
NETWORK EXECUTIVE.	You are coming to the meeting with one basic concern: to gain the largest viewing audience and hence the most advertising dollars. (Note: The network executive will have to be a student who can effectively chair the debate and make the final decisions on the basis of the evidence presented.)
STATION MANAGER.	Although you are aware that there have been complaints about excessive television violence from some groups in this middle-sized city, you are concerned about your station's falling ratings.
PARENT ACTION GROUP (two representatives).	You are concerned about violence on television and the number of junk-food ads that the station runs. You are also concerned about the lack of good programs for children aged ten to fourteen. Finally, the station's licence is up for renewal, and your group has already conducted successful production boycotting.

   The simulation does not have a clear resolution. The process is what matters. When a group presents its slate of programs, possibly for one evening (e.g., Friday), it will have to convince the class that it has as good a line-up as possible. Each group will be limited by the constraints of its budget, available old programs, program pilots, and the ratings of the competition.

DEMOGRAPHIC APPEALS

Certain shows are designed to attract specific types of people, for example, the highly educated versus the moderately educated, high-income earners versus low-income earners, men versus women, or working women versus homemakers.

1. Have students watch two shows and find evidence of their demographic appeals. They should keep track of the commercials that accompany the shows to see whether the products and services advertised match up with the type of people to whom they think the show appeals.

2. a) Create with students a questionnaire that will allow them to determine the favourite television programs of groups such as students, teachers, and parents. Have them display the results in a graph.

   b) Some of the programs may be favourites for all the groups, while some are favourites for only one. Have students examine the programs and consider reasons for the appeal of the shows.

3. a) Obtain a copy of the current Nielsen television ratings. You will need both the yearly American publication, *The Nielsen Report*, and the Canadian publication, *Television Trends* (see "Institutional Resources" on pp. 221-26). These will provide information about the top-rated American and Canadian programs, according to sex and age groups (e.g., teens and children). Have students compare the various groups that have been surveyed to the overall North American ratings. What is the significance of the patterns? (This will be especially pertinent if the student surveys show major deviations from the Nielsen ratings.)

   b) *Television Trends* provides invaluable statistics on Canadian viewing habits and on the various trends in viewer preferences. What will emerge from a comparison of these with the American statistics are the distinctive Canadian trends. For example, in the top ten regularly scheduled Canadian programs the Saturday evening hockey telecast has usually been the number-one program for adults and rates in the top five in viewership for all network programs – both Canadian and American. Intriguing information such as the fact that Maritimers have been the heaviest television viewers in Canada is also included. In addition, we learn that some American programs, such as "Disney", receive a much higher rating in Canada than in the United States. Have students examine the current Canadian ratings, pick out the significant patterns, and discuss their significance.

4. Ask students to create a new television series. They should decide on an appropriate title, type of program, time slot, stars, characters, and setting. They should also consider the audience that their show is likely to attract and suggest some appropriate products to advertise in the commercial breaks. Pretending that the rest of the class are network executives, they can then make a presentation that will convince the class that their show will be a success in attracting an audience.

Film

People go to the movies for the various ways they express the experiences of our lives, and as a means of avoiding and postponing the pressures we feel. This latter function of art – generally referred to disparagingly as escapism – may also be considered as refreshment, and in terms of big city life and small town boredom, it may be a big factor in keeping us sane.

Pauline Kael, American film critic

OVERVIEW

If Canadian stories are worthwhile making into movies, then companies will be sent into Canada to make them.

Lewis Selznik, Hollywood producer, 1922

Almost all of us go to the movies: to be entertained, to get away from the house, or to have an evening out with friends. Students are no exception, and they go to movies much more frequently than the general population – 70 per cent of movie-going audiences are under the age of twenty-five. But movies are a great deal more than mere entertainment; they provide role models, reflect our society – past and present – and influence the way in which we perceive the world.

In addition, to those who make them, movies have always been big business. Since 1914, when the first movie palace opened in New York, the movie has become a universal mass medium. Its importance as a mass medium persists today, despite the competition of television and video-cassette recorders (VCRs). In 1984 films grossed over $4 billion at the box office. In 1986 the average cost of a Hollywood film was $11 million. With close to 500 films released each year in North America, there is great competition for the movie-going audience.

Movies are governed primarily by the commercial need to attract the largest possible audience, and mainstream movies tend to create a product that consists of familiar themes, clearly identifiable characters, and understandable resolutions. To cater to the different needs of their audience, filmmakers usually make films that fit into one or more common genres (i.e., comedy, fantasy, drama, western, science fiction, musical, teen pictures, and horror). The huge commercial successes of directors such as George Lucas and Steven Spielberg show that they have an intuitive grasp of cultural archetypes as well as a solid knowledge of current film technology.

The movies sell us images, they manipulate us, they assault our senses; but they also move us, excite us, and above all entertain us.

Thomas H. Ohlgren, author

As well as being big business, film is a communication medium. As in other forms of communication, a film involves people (the senders) saying something (the messages) to other people (the receivers). Film messages have left their mark on contemporary culture, from the opinions we hold about other people and races to our notions of fashion, our ways of speaking, and even our hairstyles. However, the much debated question "Do movies shape society or reflect it?" cannot readily be resolved.

Role models are an important influence in the lives of the young. From the very beginnings of film, movie stars have provided strong role models. These have ranged from the innocent women (Mary Pickford and Lillian Gish) and swashbuckling heroes (Douglas Fairbanks and Rudolph Valentino) of the 1920s to the strong-willed individuals (Harrison Ford, Kathleen Turner, Sally Fields, Al Pacino) of the 1980s.

Film is also an emotive medium that stimulates personal and individual interpretations. Audiences themselves bring a great deal to the films they watch – their values and world view and a range of experiences – that conditions how they respond to what they see on the screen.

When people enter a darkened movie theatre, they step into a world that is very different from their own lives. When they become lost in the movie and when they laugh or cry, although they know that the people are only actors and the scenery is only cardboard, they have accepted the reality that the filmmaker has created. In this way the lives and emotions of a film's characters can have a powerful effect on an audience. Many filmgoers also react unthinkingly to movies and often accept the view of life they portray. For example, Hollywood films that show women lounging around nightclubs rather than working at home or in an office convey certain attitudes about the role of women to an audience.

Film viewing is a total experience. The darkened theatre creates an enveloping environment, in which you adjust from the world outside; it provides a transition zone, in which you prepare for the world of the film. The screen envelops the audience.

David Booth, Robert Barton, and Douglas Young, *Film* (Toronto: Longman, 1972), page 39

Those who have wanted to control others have been aware of this power of movies. Before and during the Second World War, Hitler ordered the production of movies that glorified the Nazi philosophy and captured the minds of a whole nation. As far back as 1917 Lenin recognized the same power in movies in the following statement: "The film is for us the most important instrument of all the arts. It is the greatest teacher; it teaches not only through the brain, but through the whole body."

Despite the fact that 98 per cent of the films shown in Canada are foreign – mostly American – Canada has a film industry whose history reaches back to the beginning of film. Internationally, Canada has been best known for the short films produced by the National Film Board of Canada, whose films have won awards at every major festival. Producing Canadian feature films for theatrical distribution has not been easy. Distinguished Canadian films (e.g., *Mon Oncle Antoine*, *Goin' Down the Road*, *Wedding in White*, *Lies My Father Told Me*, *The Grey Fox*) have not always been commercially successful. Their tone is low key, they are tentative in their statements, and they convey a somewhat different value system from their American counterparts. For example, many Canadian films tend to be about survivors, rather than about victors.

In 1985 forty-two English- and French-Canadian feature films were produced, at a cost of about $70 million. Many were produced with the assistance of Telefilm Canada, a government agency founded in 1968 as the Canadian Film Development Corporation, whose purpose is to assist in the promotion and development of the Canadian film industry.

The following materials are good sources of information on the history and impact of film:

- Booth, David; Barton, Robert; and Young, Douglas. *Film*. Toronto: Longman, 1972.
- Dispenza, Joseph. *Freeze Frame* (sound filmstrip). Dayton, Ohio: Pflaum Publishing, 1973.
- Johnson, Ron, and Bone, Jan. *Understanding the Film*. 3rd ed. Lincolnwood, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1986.

- Jowett, Garth, and Linton, James M. *Movies as Mass Communication*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1980.
- Knight, Arthur. *The Liveliest Art*. New York: New American Library, 1979.

When we view a film, we react in different ways. Our reactions depend on our personality, our values, and our background. Our involvement in a film is also involuntary. Our first response to a film is primarily emotional rather than intellectual.

The activities in this section are designed to help students understand how films work, how they affect values and construct reality. The activities are organized into seven subsections, which cover some of the basic areas of film. There is an example of a fully developed lesson plan at the beginning of each section. This is followed by a series of ideas that can be developed by the teacher.

The following publications, from which many of the activities have been adapted, are excellent sources of additional activities:

Booth, David; Barton, Robert; and Young, Douglas. *Film*. Toronto: Longman, 1972.

Curriculum and Staff Development Services. *Elementary Screen Education Guidelines*. North York, Ont.: Board of Education for the City of North York, 1982.

Henderson, Jim. *Mediascan*. Toronto: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1976.

Johnson, Ron, and Bone, Jan. *Understanding Film*. 3rd ed. Lincolnwood, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1986.

Lacey, Richard. *Seeing With Feeling – Film in the Classroom*. Toronto: W.B. Saunders, 1972.

Laybourne, Kit. *The Animation Book*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1979.

McLuhan, Marshall; Hutchon, Kathryn; and McLuhan, Eric. *City as Classroom: Understanding Language and Media*. Toronto: Book Society of Canada, 1977.

Phillips, William N. *Analyzing Films: A Practical Guide*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985.

Rissover, Fredric, and Birch, David C. *Mass Media and the Popular Arts*. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983.

Schrank, Jeffrey. *Understanding Mass Media*. 3rd ed. Lincolnwood, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1986.

Thomsen, William F. *Media and Communication*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972.

Whetmore, Edward Jay. *Mediamerica – Form, Content, and Consequence of Mass Communication*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1979.

GLOSSARY

CAMERA AND SHOOTING TERMS

Camera angle The position of the camera relative to the horizontal plane of the subject. In a high-angle shot, the camera is above the subject; in an eye-level or flat shot, the camera is on the same plane as the subject; in a low-angle shot the camera is below the subject. Note that the camera distance and camera angle should vary from shot to shot; such changes should, however, make sense within the context of the film sequence.

Camera distance The apparent distance of the camera from the subject: extreme close-up (XCU), close-up (CU), medium shot (MS), long shot (LS).

Camera movement An actual or simulated movement relative to the subject:

- **Pan** Slow, steady movement across a scene from a fixed point.
- **Follow** Like the pan, but the camera is directed at an individual or object as it moves through a scene.
- **Tilt** A vertical pan or follow.
- **Zoom in–zoom out** Makes use of the zoom lens to approach or back away from the subject.
- **Dolly or track** Makes use of a wheeled vehicle to move the camera alongside, towards, or away from the action.

Scene A clearly identifiable part of an event, usually in a single location and in a single time span; it generally consists of several shots. (See Herbert Zettl, *Sight, Sound, Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics* [Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1973], pp. 274-75.)

Sequence A series of scenes shown together, related by theme, plot, or location, that makes up an organic whole and that has a clearly identifiable beginning and end. Usually several sequences are put together to make even a short film.

Shot or take What is recorded on film in one uninterrupted run of the camera; the basic unit of film.

EDITING TERMS

Cut The immediate change from one shot to the next.

Dissolve The superimposition of one shot, which is fading out, on the next shot, which is fading in.

Fade-in A shot that begins totally over- or underexposed (white or black) and that gradually becomes properly exposed.

Fade-out A shot that ends by changing from the proper exposure to an extreme under- or overexposure.

Jump cut An abrupt and jarring change from shot to shot or scene to scene.

Superimposition An effect similar to a double exposure.

DISCUSSING FILM IN THE CLASSROOM

> If you think movies can't be killed, you underestimate the power of education.
>
> Pauline Kael, film critic

> A film without emotional feeling is scarcely worth consideration.
>
> Sergei Eisenstein, filmmaker

In view of the fact that movies are in large part "emotion pictures", teachers should deal with students' emotional responses first before delving into a film's intellectual implications or its technical aspects.

1. Following the showing of a film in class, ask students to note which images or sounds from the film were most memorable. As images and sounds are recalled, they prompt other images and sounds by association, and students can begin to discuss the movie and learn how it was perceived by others in the class. This kind of exchange sets the stage for discussing other elements that are basic to narrative film. Keep in mind the nature of the film (e.g., documentary, western, romance, fantasy/adventure). For a profitable discussion, draw selectively from the following list of topics:

   - the use of technical elements: sound, music, lighting, composition of shots, movement, special effects, colour, camera angles, editing
   - range of emotions generated
   - character development
   - credibility and unity of plot
   - credibility of characters
   - theme and motifs
   - quality of acting
   - relation to the individual's own life (To what extent does it confirm students' experience? Intensify it? Extend it?)

2. Often our favourite movies contain magic moments that we enjoy recalling. Ask students to select one such moment and indicate how the following contributed to its power: (a) the cinematic techniques, (b) the quality of the acting, (c) the context of the scene.

3. It is important to explore the language of film in a variety of interesting ways so that students will have a common vocabulary for discussion and for scriptwriting. For example, ways must be found to allow students to experience directly the effects of camera angles and movement. Subsequently, more expository means of presentation can be used for reinforcement. The following exercises suggest a structured sequence.

   Students can experiment and practise with camera point of view without using a real camera; all they need is a homemade viewfinder. To make this, they should take a piece of heavy paper and cut a rectangle out of the middle, creating a frame with a 3:4 ratio. Simply by putting their eye to the viewfinder, they will be able to search out and select views.

   With students, create a simple story and then have some of them perform it in front of the class, while others use their viewfinders to "shoot" the performance. Students should take turns performing and recording the presentation. To get a *long shot* of the group, students should stand at a distance from the performers and hold the viewfinder close to one eye. As they move the viewfinder away from their eye, they will obtain a *medium shot*, and as they move it farther away, they will get a *close-up* of one person in the group.

Have students stand on chairs and focus their viewfinders down on the group. This gives them a *high-angle* shot. Ask students what effect is achieved through this type of shot. Have students take a *low-angle* shot by getting on the floor and focusing their viewfinders straight up at the group. Ask students how this position gives the group power.

By moving the viewfinder from left to right and then from right to left, students will learn how to *pan*; by moving straight into the group, students will learn how to *dolly*; and by following along with someone who is moving, they will learn to *track.*

Finally, have students point their viewfinders down to shoot the feet of the group and then move the viewfinders up. This will give them an example of *tilting* the camera. Other camera terms for investigation are found in the glossary on page 77.

4. A good technique for reinforcing film language is to examine photographs and comic strips. (Comics lend themselves to the dynamic use of angles and camera distance.) Have students bring to class materials drawn from newspapers and magazines that illustrate:

   - the use of a low camera angle to make a person or thing look superior or powerful;
   - the use of a high angle to make a person or thing look inferior or weak;
   - a picture strengthened by verticals;
   - a picture made restful with horizontal lines;
   - diagonal lines used to suggest excitement and dynamism;
   - colour carefully chosen to give added meaning to a picture.

5. Reinforce the film terms by showing a short film that contains examples of most of the following:

   - shot, scene, sequence
   - types of shots: long, medium, close-up, zoom, establishing
   - angles: normal, high, low
   - fade in, fade out, dissolve, cut away, cut in
   - camera points of view: objective, subjective
   - hand-held-camera work

   Numerous films available from the National Film Board can be used for this purpose, including the following: *Sky* (1963; 16 mm, colour, 9 min), *Nails* (1979; 16 mm, colour, 13 min), and *Corral* (1954; 16 mm, b/w, 11 min). After showing the film, proceed inductively with a lesson in which the key terms are identified and discussed. For a greater elaboration of film techniques, refer to such film books as *Understanding Movies* by Louis D. Giannetti (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976) and *How to Read a Film* by James Monaco (rev. ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

6. Short films employ an enormous range of themes and techniques. Select ten films around which to develop a unit of study that combines an examination of genre, themes, and cinematic techniques. For example, a film such as *Glass* (McGraw-Hill, 1960; 16 mm, colour, 11 min) can be used to study editing, as well as the theme of individual creativity versus human alienation. Norman McLaren's *Neighbours* (National Film Board, 1952; 16 mm, colour, 8 min) can be used to reveal the animation techniques of pixillation, as well as to discuss the themes of human conflict and the territorial imperative.

7. Filmmaking is a co-operative effort. Divide the class into teams and ask students to research and present to the class information about the roles of the major members of the film team (i.e., producer, director, actor, editor, cinematographer, art director, writer). As a follow-up, show a film that will allow each group to share its insights with the class.

8. After viewing a film in class, ask students to recall details about the sound track, including the background music. Were the sound effects and music noticeable? What different effects are created when the background music contains lyrics? Why did the filmmaker choose to give the sound track this quality? (See the television section for other activities based on sound tracks.)

9. Feature films are often shown on television. Ask students to examine the changes that take place in an audience's perception of a film as a result of the nature of television (e.g., size of screen, the fact that it is watched in the privacy of one's home, network censorship, interruptions for commercials). Ask students why some films manage to succeed on television while others do not. Films are often made specifically for television. Discuss how these films compare with films made for movie theatres.

10. At this stage, students' knowledge of film language should be applied to scriptwriting exercises. There are a variety of acceptable script formats in use in the industry. The following is one example:

    Sample Script Format

    - Number each shot.
    - Name the type of shot (LS, MS, CU, XCU).
    - Describe the angle used if other than normal.
    - Indicating the camera movement, describe what happens.
    - Indicate all sounds and dialogue.

Example

Shot 399: MCU. Mike holds chair for Jane to sit.
Jane sits as camera dollies in to close-up of her.
JANE: Thank you, Michael.

Shot 400: HIGH ANGLE LS of table with Wallace on one side and Mike on other. Sound of bell is heard.
MIKE: Hear it not, Duncan.

Have students demonstrate how they would shoot at least one minute of a film on one of the following situations, using as wide a variety of shots as is feasible:

- a car race
- the opening of a rock concert
- a child sliding down a playground slide
- two people meeting at a train station
- a child finding a fifty-dollar bill on a street corner

11. In the competition for audiences among local movie houses, made-for-television movies, and feature-film videos, promoters of new releases have relied heavily on two techniques: media hype and diversification of films to attract interest groups, particularly teenaged audiences. Bring into class several copies of the entertainment section of a large daily newspaper and discuss with the class the strategies that they can see at work in the promotion of films for special-interest groups. Have students research the results of the advertising campaigns in terms of audience response and box-office success.

FILM AND SOCIETY

1. This activity has been adapted from the text *City as Classroom* (p. 134). Have students consider a hypothetical situation in which film is no longer part of our life. The following questions can serve as topics for discussion or as an impetus for a writing assignment.
   - How would the disappearance of film affect your use of free time? Your relationships with your friends? Your topics of conversation? Your preference in dress or food? How would the absence of film affect your fantasy life?
   - What would happen to sports? To television? To magazines? Would the theatrical stage regain its former importance? What would happen to the popular notion of a "star"? Would the function of the car in relation to entertainment change? How? How would travel be affected?
   - What groups of people would be put out of work if the film industry ceased to exist?
   - Would other countries be affected? Would they be cut off from knowledge of the North American way of life? If they were, would this be to their advantage or disadvantage?

2. People have used various means, such as portraits, diaries, letters, and photographs, to preserve their images and to "communicate" with their descendants. To these are now added home movies and videos. Discuss with students whether or not these present a truer, more lifelike image of their families than the other media do. Ask them whether their parents have home movies/videos of them growing up, and if so, when their parents stopped recording their activities. Have students bring in some examples.

3. Discuss the following questions with the class: Why do people say children or younger people should not see certain films? Why are some films classified as "Family" entertainment and others as "Adult Accompaniment" entertainment? Do you think the films you watch should be classified or restricted in any way? Do you think the films of children younger than yourselves should be classified or restricted in any way?

4. Films can influence our behaviour, sometimes even when we have not seen them. Ask students to examine people in their neighbourhood, on television, and in magazines and newspapers for examples of this influence. They can look for influences on the following: clothing, fashions, teenage subgroups, musical styles, popular hobbies, fads, cars, foods, vacation spots.

5. Have the class select five or more recently popular films, identify the elements that contributed to their popularity, and try to develop a formula for cinematic popularity. Ask students questions such as the following: How important were the stars? The special effects? Did the films include ideas or trends that are currently appealing? Happy endings? Hit music? Then ask the class to try to explain the failure of some recent films in terms of the formula that the class developed.

6. When this current decade is over, people will look back and write about the film trends of the decade just as people have done about the previous decades. Disaster films were a trend in the late 1960s, as were space films in the 1970s. Ask students to speculate on the trends for the next ten years.

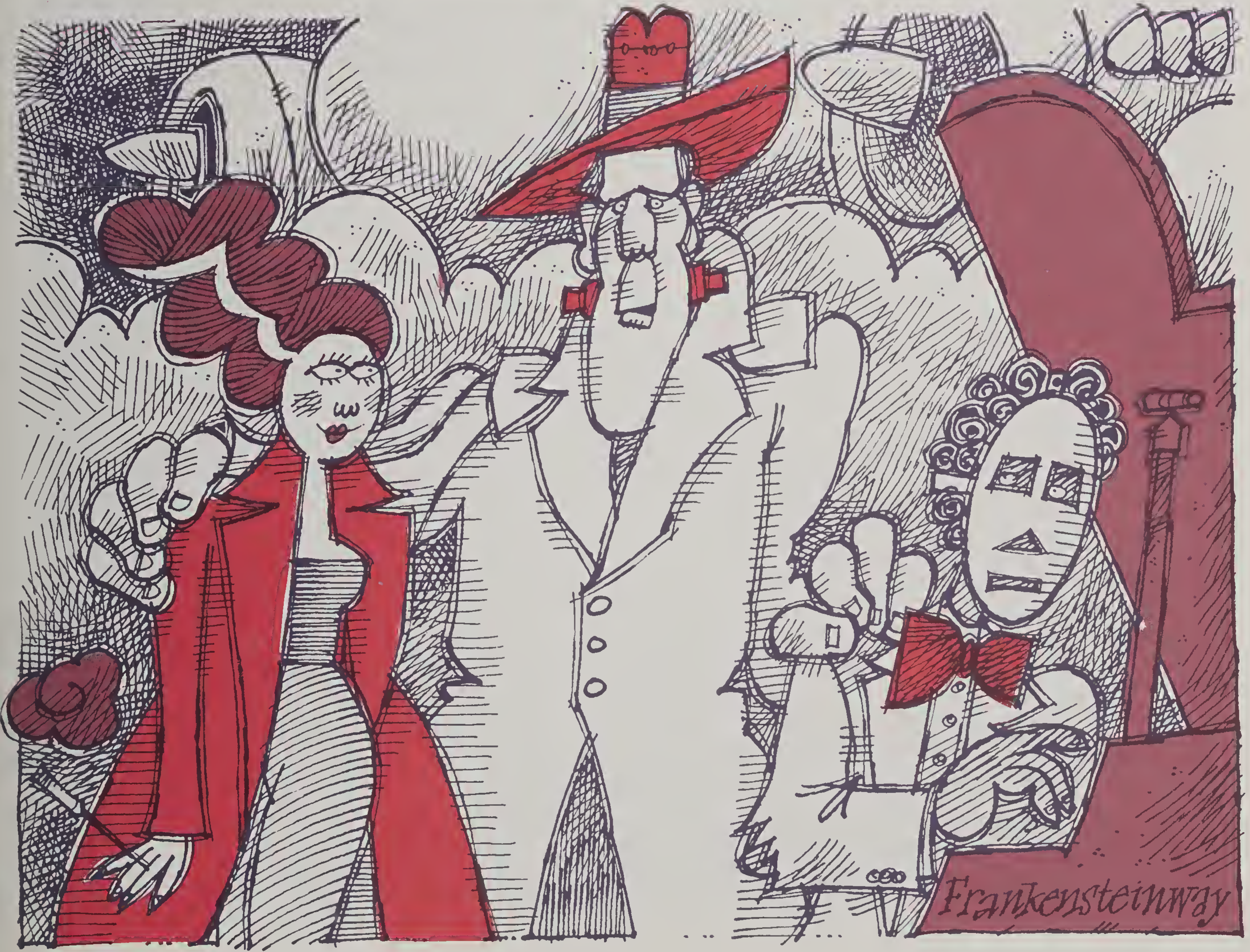
7. Censorship and the classification of films have always been controversial. Censorship involves the banning or removing of parts of films. Classification involves labelling a film according to the age group for which it is appropriate. In Ontario these actions have been undertaken in an attempt to reflect what the Ontario Film Review Board calls "community standards". Have the class discuss or debate the following questions:
   - What criteria would you use to pick people to serve on the provincial censorship/classification board?
   - What criteria would you use to censor or classify films?
   - In the 1970s and 1980s the standards for what was acceptable material for a film changed considerably. The phenomenon of pushing the limits, that is, allowing more violence and sexually explicit scenes, was controversial and prompted many public debates. Stage a debate on the definition of "community standards", for example, "Resolved: that community standards are impossible to define."

8. Hollywood has been described as "the dream factory", an apt term for an industry whose product has engaged the imaginations of millions of people around the world. But regardless of where films are made, film has always had the enormous potential to cater to our personal dream world, our capacity for a rich fantasy life, and what is often termed *escapism*. Ask students to analyse this dream world in the following contexts:
   - "Movies can make dreamers of you." Have students discuss the truth of this statement. They should then describe movies that give us a dream world rather than the real world.
   - Many films show a dreamlike atmosphere that can mirror a character's state of mind, evoke mystery and suspense, and add other intriguing dimensions to a story. Discuss with students films that contain dream imagery and show what function this imagery performs. (As an alternative to a discussion, encourage students to draw or paint scenes from films that are especially evocative.)
   - "You have to live it. Why should you go and watch it?" This is what some people think about realistic films: life is unhappy enough, so why see the same thing on the screen when you can forget your troubles in a light, happy film? Have students defend or reject this point of view.
   - Myths represent implicit belief systems that express the fears, desires, and aspirations of our culture. Have students choose three feature films and show how these mythic elements are developed.

9. Horror films range from the traditional versions of *Frankenstein* to the more recent violent and bloody manifestations (e.g., *Friday the Thirteenth* and its numerous sequels) that have provoked much public controversy. Discuss with students the range of horror films, their special appeal, and the nature and meaning of the violent acts in these films.

10. There are many films that may be artistically bad but that gain a loyal audience in second-run movie houses or possibly on pay TV or video cassettes. Books such as *The Fifty Worst Films of All Time* by Harry Medved and Randy Dreyfuss (New York: Popular Library, 1978) celebrate this phenomenon. Ask students to discuss the appeal of the films and the nature of the audience that sees them.

11. There are numerous cult films that command a loyal audience of viewers who see these films many times (e.g., *The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Gone With the Wind, Casablanca*). Ask students to watch one of these films and to determine the basis of its appeal.



REVIEWING A FILM

1. The study and writing of film critiques can be an invaluable exercise for teaching students the values of close reading and critical thinking. Such an exercise can demonstrate to students that understanding will enhance enjoyment – that good film criticism is a process of discovering how a film did or did not work its magic on us. With the emphasis in this unit on first exploring the emotive aspects of film, it is appropriate to quote Jay Scott, film critic for the *Globe and Mail*, regarding his critical approach. "The evaluation process is one of reacting and trying to order that reaction. Then what you try to do is analyse the emotion and find out what created that."

   Show a film that is appropriate to the age group. Because of their easy availability and lower costs, feature-film videos are suggested for classroom use. They also allow for easy replaying of key sequences, such as the opening ones, which are ideal for establishing setting, themes, tone, and so on. As well, footage counters allow you to return to an exact point in the film, and the pause button allows you to study interior framing and other elements of composition.

   When students write their reviews, they should not use the elements listed below as if they were making up a shopping list; rather, these elements should be considered as dimensions that need to be worked organically into a review. Teachers might begin by asking students to write a review based on only one of the elements listed below (e.g., theme, character).

Film Review Outline for Students

Film reviews are a form of journalistic writing and generally appear in newspapers and magazines. They tend to use relatively short paragraphs with information tightly packed in, and a light, breezy style. Be emphatic in what you say, and do not be heavy or long-winded.

Your review should have the following :

- a title
- an indication of the type of film you are reviewing (e.g., western, musical, comedy, horror, drama)
- a very, very brief summary of the content or "story" of the film, identifying the main conflict, mentioning the setting, and giving some overall assessment of the film in terms of its major strengths or weaknesses, particularly with regard to viewer interest and believability. You should also mention the theme of the film – the central idea behind the story, the point that the film attempts to make, or its moral or lesson. Keep summaries short and concentrate on analysis and commentary. A film review that simply summarizes a film rather than critically commenting on it fails.

- lead and supporting actors' and actresses' names and the names of the characters they play. These should be integrated into the review and not simply listed. The conventional way to do this is to mention the character as you are briefly summarizing the film and to include the actor's name in parentheses immediately after the character's name, for example, "Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone)". *Note:* Be sure to maintain a clear distinction between the character and the actor or actress throughout the review. If you are discussing the story, then refer only to the character; if you are discussing the acting, then use the actor's name.
- the director's name, integrated into thoughtful commentary on the directing (not just "The directing was good"). Does the film seem to flow well, from scene to scene and from sequence to sequence, or is it disjointed and hard to follow? Do we know why the characters are doing what they are doing? Is it visually pleasing? Is the pace appropriate? Is the music suitable? Are the special effects (if any) suitable? Does the visual impact match the requirements of the story? Does the director elicit from the audience the intended reaction?
- thoughtful commentary on the acting of lead and supporting actors (more for the leads). Are the actors believable? What do they do well? What do they do poorly? Are the roles difficult to portray? How has each actor dealt with the difficulties of his or her role? Does the actor behave the same way in every film?
- an overall assessment of the film. This should be a restatement of what you have indicated in the title or near the beginning of the review and supported by your commentary in the body. Point out both the strengths and weaknesses of the film.

Your review may also have:

- references to the producer and his or her role in bringing the film together. Was it a low- or high-budget film?
- references to the script and scriptwriter. Is the film well written? Do the actors have good, effective lines to deliver, or do their words sound phony, forced, or stilted even though the acting may be reasonably good? Is it a good story? Does it have unity? Is it melodramatic? Does it capture the interest of the audience? Is it a formula story, or does it say something new (or something old in a new way)? Is it adapted from a novel or stage play?
- a comparison of the film with other films by the same director with which you are familiar. If you do not know the director's other films, omit this step.
- a comparison of the film with other films of the same type by other directors, or a comparison of the acting of actors in the film with their work in other films
- comments on special effects, camera work, sound track, editing, colour, and so on. If you mention any of the pictorial qualities of the film (camera work, colour, lighting, visual impact), you should mention the name of the director of photography (also known as the *cinematographer*).
- commentary on the significance or importance of the film

2. Ask students to find a film review in a recent issue of a newspaper or magazine. (They should avoid little capsule "reviews" of one or two paragraphs that sometimes appear in tabloids and they should be careful not to confuse a feature article about an actor or director with a review.) The review does not have to be of a film that they have seen, but if they have seen the film, so much the better. Students should then:

   - cut the review out or make a copy of it;
   - cut the review up into single columns and glue, tape, or staple it to a sheet of notebook paper so that there is blank paper on either side of the review;
   - go through the review to find where the major topics are dealt with; underline, circle, or draw a box around each of the topics as it appears in the review; and then draw an arrow to the blank paper beside the review, where they will write down just what it is they have marked in the review. (Not every one of these topics is present in every review, but most of them are.)

   Students should look for the following topics in the review:

   - title
   - type of film
   - summary of the content (story) of the film
   - theme or central idea, moral, or lesson of the film
   - lead actor's name and the name of the character he or she played (note the use of parentheses)
   - names of the supporting actors and the names of the characters they played
   - director's name
   - commentary on the direction
   - commentary on the acting of the lead actor
   - commentary on the acting of supporting actors
   - overall assessment of the film (Students should examine the title, opening, and ending of the review.)
   - mention of the producer
   - mention of the scriptwriter, cinematography, editing, or special effects (if any)
   - comparison to other films of the same type or by the same director

3. Ask students how publicity, such as film advertisements in newspapers and commercials on television, affects their friends' and their own choice of films to see. Have them survey the class to determine the factors that influence the decisions of individuals to attend films. They should consider such aspects as the following: reviews, word-of-mouth information, knowledge of the stars, type of film, publicity.

4. Film critic Pauline Kael has written: "The role of a critic is to help people see what is in the work, what is in it that shouldn't be in it, and what is not in it that could be. He is a good critic if he helps people understand more about the work than they could see for themselves; he is a great critic, if by his understanding and feeling for the work, by his passion, he can excite people so that they want to experience more of the art that is there, waiting to be seized" (from *I Lost It at the Movies* [New York: Bantam, 1965], p. 246).

   Students could be asked to find examples of extended critical pieces from collections in books by film critics (e.g., Pauline Kael, Andrew Sarris, Stanley Kauffmann) or from film magazines (e.g., *American Film*, *Cinema Canada*). They can then examine these writings in the light of Pauline Kael's statement.

FILM HISTORY AND GENRES

1. The thematic approach to film study provides an excellent way of grouping films so that similarities and differences can be noted. A unit on the concept of heroes in film can be an invaluable way for students to learn about the various ways in which society has viewed heroism in the past and how it is viewed today. You may choose from dozens of short and feature-length films available on cassette. If you wish to make this a central theme for your class, you could use a multimedia method that includes television, newspapers, books, magazines, and radio. Some of the films that could be used in such a unit include *The Star Wars Trilogy*, *Superman I* and *Superman II*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and *Breaking Away*.

   On the first day work directly with what the students actually know about heroism. (How would you define a hero? Who would qualify to be one?) Students' responses invariably focus on pop-culture heroes (e.g., Hulk Hogan, the stars of "Miami Vice"). By using video excerpts, introduce examples of other heroes, from such films as *Gandhi*, *Shane*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *The Grey Fox*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *The Terry Fox Story*.

   The following are some suggested thematic groupings for films and some selected titles (available in video cassette) that can be used to extend the study of novels through multimedia approaches. You will have to determine the appropriateness of each title for your class.

   - Search for Identity: *Citizen Kane*, *Who Has Seen the Wind?*, *Tess*, *Apocalypse Now*
   - Images of Youth: *The Bay Boy*, *My American Cousin*, *The Black Stallion*, *Breaking Away*, *The Breakfast Club*, *Stand by Me*
   - The Archetypal Hero: *The Terry Fox Story*, *Norma Rae*, *Silkwood*, *Star Wars*, *Shane*, *Rocky*
   - The Individual vs. Society: *The Grey Fox*, *Goin' Down the Road*, *The Elephant Man*, *Chariots of Fire*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Being There*, *On the Waterfront*
   - Comedy: *Annie Hall*, *The Graduate*, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *Dr. Strangelove*

2. Have students study the content of a current movie thriller and compare it with that of a "made-for-television" whodunit. How are they different? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

3. Early documentary filmmaker John Grierson described documentary film as the "creative treatment of actuality". Regardless of the apparent naturalism and realism in a documentary film, it is still a subjective interpretation of a real-life event. By doing the following activity, students can learn how a documentary film creates a particular point of view.

   Divide the class into four groups. Each group is to write a short documentary treatment of the subject "Our School" for one of the following audiences:

   - the students: (a) a negative impression, (b) a positive impression
   - the parents: (a) a negative impression, (b) a positive impression

   Refer to the activities in the section on television for more information on the documentary.

4. Have students view a film that has been categorized as a comedy, evaluate the techniques used in it to create humour, and explain why the techniques were or were not used well. Refer also to the activities in the section on television for material on the analysis of sitcoms and comic devices.

5. For a study of the history of film, ask students to research in the library the different periods of film and to report on the important developments in each period. If possible, show them examples from each period.

6. Films about teenagers have always been popular. Ask students how realistic they find these films. Discuss whether such films represent the lives of teenagers as they know them or whether they are Hollywood's view of what teenagers are like. Ask students what methods film producers and distributors are using to convince more teenagers to view their films.

FILM AND LITERATURE

1. The study of film adaptations of fiction provides a creative way to illuminate the structure of both fiction and narrative film. For language arts teachers, the cross-media comparison is a strong motivational device for any class. However, what sometimes happens is that students and teachers engage in futile arguments about film adaptations of literature. Typically, students complain that the film deleted or changed key scenes; that the actors did not seem appropriate; that the book was so much more complex; and so on. This activity is designed to help students to deal with the problems of film adaptation so that they will see the special strengths and limitations of each medium.
    - Choose a story that is suitable for the grade level and development of your students. There is a film version available for each of the following: "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" by Ambrose Bierce, "The Rocking Horse Winner" by D.H. Lawrence, "My Financial Career" by Stephen Leacock, "The Sweater" by Roch Carrier, "Boys and Girls" by Alice Munro, "The Red Kite" by Hugh Hood.
    - Have students read the original version of the story and discuss both the emotional impact and the special structures of rising action, climax, and dénouement.
    - Lead a discussion on the story's theme, characterization, mood, and style, and the point of view of the narrator.
    - Have students create a storyboard for a particular scene in the story, discuss the problems that they see in translating the story into film, and suggest possible solutions.
    - After a general discussion of the written text and the film adaptation, you can move ahead to demonstrate, using a literary text, details of the filmmaker's art. The aim of this activity is to show students the integrity of both forms of art and to provoke a critical analysis of the artistic decisions that both the writer and the director have made.
    - Select one key scene from the text that demonstrates the filmmaker's art. A one- or two-minute scene is sufficient. If the adaptation is on videotape, you can use the memory button and rewind the tape to the central scene for discussion. Also, the opening scene, the turning point, or the ending of the film may be an appropriate scene to review carefully.
    - In *Boys and Girls* (from Magic Lantern Films), for example, the filmmaker has decided to change the ending from the one in the text. What are the students' opinions about this decision? In general, is such a change a good idea? Why might a filmmaker do it? In this particular case, does the director's decision enhance or weaken the story? (Sometimes, a second or third look at such a scene is rewarding for students.) This kind of discussion encourages students to base their opinions about film adaptations on specific references to the text.

- Show the final scene once more. Ask students to note carefully the artistic decisions that the director has made in translating the story to film. Suggest that they base their critical judgements on some of the following factors:
  a) *the setting*. This particular setting is not the setting chosen by the writer. Why did the filmmaker choose this setting? What does it add?
  b) *the dialogue*. In this case the dialogue spoken by the main character is not in the original story. Does the message of the dialogue in this scene add or detract from the theme of the story as students have studied it?
  c) *the camera*. Note two specific angles of the camera in this scene. What effect is conveyed as a result of these decisions?
  d) *the music*. In this scene the director has opted for theme music in the background. Is this music simply pleasant background, or does it have an artistic function?
  e) *film symbolism*. In this scene the director has made use of visual symbols. Are there any objects in the scene that are symbolic or ironic?

2. Students can apply the critical factors outlined in activity 1 to a number of film adaptations of literature, including film versions of Shakespeare. Help students to review one particular part of a film and to analyse it using the same skills that they employ in traditional literary criticism.

3. Film adaptations of popular novels are so numerous that criticism by a film audience usually begins with the film's faithfulness to the original text. This activity encourages students to focus on the unique aspects of words and images. Any film and literature comparison should require students to move beyond a superficial evaluation of "Which version did you prefer?" You might ask students to decide on the major additions, deletions, changes, or improvements in the following: (a) characterization, (b) plot, (c) foreshadowing, (d) symbols and motifs, (e) handling of time: actual and psychological, (f) emotional impact, (g) the total experience.

   Examine in particular the introductory paragraphs of the novel and the opening segments of the corresponding film. Read passages from the novel to the class before showing the film excerpt. Find one key scene in the novel that was particularly difficult to adapt. What techniques did the director use to overcome the problem?

4. Novelizations are books that have been written after a successful film has been made (e.g., *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Star Wars*). Ask students to identify the important differences among a novel, a novelization, and a novel written with the expectations of a film in mind.

5. Develop a unit using three of S.E. Hinton's novels – *Tex, The Outsiders*, and *Rumblefish* – that have been made into films. (You will have to decide on the appropriateness of these films for your class.) Divide the class into three groups. Each group reads one of the novels and views the film version of it. Students then hold a forum on film adaptation, in which each group presents a cross-media analysis of the novel's key scenes.

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

Hands-on activity is an essential dimension of media literacy and is possible in every classroom. Many of the books listed at the beginning of this section list hands-on activities for filmmaking.

HOW TO ANIMATE

1. Kit Laybourne, in *The Animation Book* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1979), provides a multitude of easy-to-prepare, stimulating activities for non-camera filmmaking. One of the best and most popular starting points is writing on film. It is inexpensive, simple, and teaches the student a wide variety of skills. Note that Norman McLaren used this technique in his films, for example, in *Begone Dull Care*. They are available from the National Film Board of Canada.
   - Obtain clear 16 mm film leader, on which students will draw with permanent transparency markers. Students should understand that (a) film is projected at twenty-four frames per second and (b) the "frame" is determined by the sprocket holes of the film.
   - Students must be made aware that film requires repetition in order for an image to register on the screen. This is an illustration of the "persistence of vision" theory.
   - Assign a full metre of clear film leader to each student and have each student practise changing colours (full blocks of red, then blue, and so on) by colouring in at least eighteen frames in one colour and then gradually moving on to another. Students can repeat this exercise with changing shapes, moving "blobs" across the frame, and introducing abstract shapes onto the frame. They can view and discuss their results immediately following the activity.

2. "Every morning for six months, at precisely 9:05 a.m., the old man would cautiously seat himself on the park bench and commence slowly to feed the pigeons." Ask students how, if they were directing this part of a movie script, they would shoot it to suggest one of the following:
   - The old man is a secret agent waiting to meet someone.
   - The old man is really a woman in disguise.
   - The old man is waiting to die.
   - The pigeons will attack him later in the film.

   It might be advisable to have students select one mode of presentation and create a storyboard.

3. A thief enters a mansion in which a widow is sleeping. Have students shoot a three-minute silent film or video in which they indicate how the thief enters the widow's bedroom. They could treat this as either a comedy or a suspense film.

4. Have students write a shooting script for a silent film based either on a story they have read or on an original idea. How will they communicate the ideas and emotions in purely visual terms?

5. Making flip books enables students to develop a sense of rhythm and pleasing design. Give each student a pad of paper and a choice of markers and pencils to draw things that are real or make-believe. Instruct them to begin with the last page of the pad and to make a simple line drawing; then on the page that precedes it, they are to draw another picture, very much like the one under it, but changed slightly. Emphasize the need to keep the designs simple. (Otherwise students may not have the time or energy to complete the flip books.) When they are finished, students exchange their books and flip the pages to see the results.

6. Students are paired; one student is to be "the camera", and the other, the camera operator. The cameras keep their eyes closed until the operators tell them to open them. Camera operators manoeuvre their cameras around the room; cameras open their eyes only when something is being "shot". Operators can, for example, turn the cameras' heads to pan or manipulate a frame to zoom. Parts of a scene may be staged in this way. After the shooting the cameras tell what they "shot". For the second round, the cameras and operators switch places. This time the operators are given a short time to plan or storyboard what they will "shoot".

7. After examining several film scripts, students choose a poem containing imagery that is suitable to film adaptation and write a film script for the poem.

EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO

No thorough study of film would be complete without a unit on the experimental film/video, which arose alongside and in opposition to the mainstream form. As a result of the advent of rock video (in particular the free-form concept video, in which a song's lyrics are rendered visually), students are now potentially more receptive to the ways of experimental media. The best of rock video reveals some of the elements of experimental filmmaking.

Most of the genres of commercial cinema and television are essentially narrative and offer only one set of filmic conventions, those that tell a story. *Non-narrative, experimental film*, on the other hand, offers alternative modes of perception. In so doing, it helps us reflect on the way in which we perceive the world. Short and often poetic in form and content, such films act as evocative catalysts and thus are good learning tools. Viewers are forced to create actively along with the film/video and to interpret for themselves what they are experiencing. (Teachers who are familiar with modern poetry, especially poems in the imagist tradition, can capitalize on their knowledge of poetic techniques and apply it in the interpretation of experimental film.) It is often necessary to see these works several times.

Many regional film libraries throughout Ontario will contain examples of experimental films from the National Film Board and from other sources. The National Film Board lists approximately twenty-five experimental films in its catalogue. The following are some of the best known: *Angel*; *Pandora*; *Synchromy*; *Pas de deux*; *Very Nice, Very Nice*; *Poen*. Teachers should also check for a listing of experimental films in the closest regional film library. The catalogue from the Canadian Film-Makers Distribution Centre (67-A Portland Street, Toronto, Ontario M5V 2M9) has a large listing of experimental films, the largest collection of documentary films in Canada, and a substantial collection of narrative films. This organization is also willing to help secondary school teachers plan suitable programs. Schools may also be interested in applying for an artist-in-the-schools program from the Ontario Arts Council. A filmmaker or video artist will spend several weeks with a class in the production of a film or video. (See the list of resources in the Appendix to this document.)

In the area of rock video, it is possible to rent concept videos and work by artists such as Laurie Anderson and John Sanborn as well as independently produced videos. The best source in Ontario is V-Tape, 489 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1A5. This company can help you to organize a program suitable to your needs.

The following sequence of activities is designed to foster a worthwhile discussion.

1. Begin with a discussion of several current concept rock videos. (Choose examples that reveal technical artistry and a good use of special effects.) Ask students how the various techniques support the themes or moods of the videos.

2. a) Show an experimental film/video. Ask students: What feelings or thoughts were evoked? What specifically were the sources for these thoughts or feelings (e.g., the sound track, recurrent images, editing techniques)? To what extent did the content seem real? Surrealistic or exaggerated? Could you relate the film to any personal experience? To a dream or the telling of a myth? To visual art or literature?

   b) After a short class discussion about students' feelings and impressions, it is important to have the class propose a variety of interpretations. At this point it would be appropriate to analyse the purpose of any special techniques.

3. You may prefer to begin this unit by having students create their own experimental films/videos. They can cut out images from magazines, put them in a sequence, and add a series of works or music or sounds that alter the perception of the images and sequence. Alternatively, they can choose an emotion like joy or sadness, try to find some way to make the shots express that emotion, move the camera so that the movement evokes how they feel, and use the image as a field of light to express their feeling.

Radio

God gave man two ears,
but only one mouth,
that he might hear twice
as much as he
speaks.

Epictetus the Stoic

He shoots ...he scores!
Let's ROCK

OVERVIEW

HISTORY

No other medium has gone through as many changes since its inception as radio. (Many may argue that film went through a similar transition at the end of the silent era. Yet, in the mid-1930s movies still presented the same plots, genres, and visual style that had been responsible for its rise to popularity two decades earlier.) An understanding of the history of radio, therefore, is critically important to an understanding of this medium today.

On December 23, 1900, Canadian-born Reginald Aubrey Fessenden tapped a microphone and was the first to utter the words so often used since by radio announcers everywhere: "One, two, three, four . . .". Broadcasting from his laboratory on the Potomac River, Fessenden asked his assistant to send a telegram about the weather conditions at the receiving station 80 km away. This first broadcast of a human voice was made by Fessenden on modified Morse code equipment. Marconi's transmission from England to Signal Hill, Newfoundland, often considered the first radio broadcast, actually came nearly a year later and was solely in Morse code. These broadcasts launched what was to become ultimately one of the largest pillars of pop culture.

Marconi better understood the impact of this medium after the *Titanic* disaster of 1912. On the night of April 14 and during the early morning of April 15, while the *Titanic* was sinking, Marconi's Morse signals provided the only information available. The *Titanic*'s radio operators continued to broadcast until the increasing slant of the sinking ship cut them off. One of these operators survived and, after being picked up by the rescue ship *Carpathia*, maintained his vigil at the Morse code key until the ship arrived back in New York on April 18. For four days the radio signal was the only source of information about one of the pre-eminent disasters of the twentieth century. The impact of the event on radio was as great as the later impact on television of the assassination of President Kennedy.

The ability to broadcast voices that sounded realistic would, however, be necessary before radio could truly flourish as a mass medium. It is widely believed that this first occurred when the United States radio station KDKA went on the air in Pittsburgh in November 1920. In fact, a Montreal radio station, XWA (later CFCF), had already started to broadcast a year previously. The first commercially licensed radio stations in Canada providing regularly scheduled programming went on the air in the early 1920s. By late in the decade a now-familiar problem began to surface. Canadians who could pick up broadcasts from the United States on their receivers preferred the American programs to their own. By this time two American radio networks, CBS and NBC, had pooled the resources of their affiliated stations and could provide slickly produced entertainment that thoroughly outclassed any similar programs produced by Canada's independent stations.

Canada's first national radio broadcast, on July 1, 1927, celebrated Canada's Diamond Jubilee. Originating from Parliament Hill in Ottawa, the broadcast linked together twenty-three stations from coast to coast.

As early as 1929 at least two radio stations in Toronto began the trend of affiliating with American networks. A concerned Prime Minister Mackenzie King appointed Sir John Aird to study broadcasting in Canada. In his report Aird proposed the creation of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Company. In 1933 the CRBC became a reality and in 1936 it was renamed the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). The CBC was devoted to preserving Canadian identity and to providing uniquely Canadian programming, a mandate that it continues to exercise to this day.

Meanwhile, in the United States commercial and privately owned radio networks prevailed, and vast numbers of Canadians continued to listen to them. However, unlike television, radio programs were relatively cheap to produce, and our radio service was able to compete with American programming in a way that is impossible for Canadian television because of high production costs. In the 1930s radio broadcaster Foster Hewitt coined the phrase "He shoots, he scores!" to telegraph hockey in an extremely visual way long before cameras showed the rush to the goal. Radio created a Saturday-night tradition at the very centre of the Canadian identity.

> It was hockey that first convinced Canadians to listen to their radio stations. In the U.S. "going to the movies" had become the pastime, but in Canada there were not as many movie houses available . . . and so Canadians stayed at home to listen to the radio. . . . Canadians tuned in and hockey became as Canadian as maple syrup.
>
> Sandy Stewart, *From Coast to Coast* (Toronto: Gage, 1975)

Hockey games continue to be the most highly rated Canadian programs in the television era.

Radio's "golden age" lasted approximately twenty-five years: from the mid-1920s to the early 1950s. During this time radio was *the* mass medium and provided the same kind of entertainment, news, and sports programs that television provides today. The "Amos 'n' Andy" show, for example, almost brought all other interests of the country to a halt each time it was broadcast. Telephone use during the broadcast dropped by half. Restaurants and movie theatres piped in the show so that their clientele would not stay at home.

Radio provided every conceivable genre: crime, adventure, soap operas, game and quiz shows, horror, thrillers, variety, comedies, public affairs, westerns, dramas, and talk shows. Radio also provided a type of program unique to its medium and no longer possible on television. The major Hollywood studios co-operated with the medium to provide hour-long dramas in which movie stars would reenact their film roles. This provided radio listeners with fresh and compelling drama and also generated very effective publicity for the film industry.

Then, as now, radio also succeeded in bringing music, both classical and popular, to millions of listeners who had no access to live music.

Like television today, radio then aimed for the broadest possible audiences and was often accused of appealing to the lowest common denominator of public taste. A 1947 *March of Time* newsreel criticized radio for, among other things, too many mindless game shows, ridiculously melodramatic soap operas, a proliferation of untalented celebrities, and too many commercials. This all sounds very much like present-day criticisms of television.

Nonetheless, there are many who feel that radio did a better job of entertaining the public than television does today. Radio presented a "theatre of the mind", which, through sounds, words, and music, created images that listeners felt they were actually seeing. It engaged the imagination in a way that television seldom does. Since the listener's mind was busily engaged in creating images, there was a healthier, more creative relationship between the medium and the listener.

Radio's "theatre of the mind" has been kept alive through radio commercials, many of which are dramatizations that utilize the same audio techniques that were refined during radio's golden age.

Prime time for radio in the golden age was the same as for television today: the evening hours between dinner and bedtime. As radio changed in the 1950s in response to television, its prime time shifted to the early morning hours from 6:00 to 9:00 a.m. As a result of the proliferation of clock radios, radio is very much a wake-up medium and one that listeners can tend to while performing the morning routines. Those who drive to work or school can continue to listen, and the personal stereo has made it possible to keep on listening in situations in which it would not be possible with a regular speaker-amplified radio (e.g., schools, factories, offices). Thus, while the character and nature of radio may have changed, it is still a powerful and pervasive medium.

The most noticeable characteristic in the shift that commercial radio underwent in the late 1940s and early 1950s was the abandonment of the broadly appealing entertainment program in favour of a format that presented music targeted towards specific demographic groups determined by age, sex, and income level.

The FM band was expected to proliferate after the Second World War, but the public was less interested in new forms of radio than it was in television. FM's main advantage over AM was superior sound reproduction, and for many years its primary format was classical music.

By the late 1960s, however, FM radio had made a significant breakthrough. A number of FM stations had switched to a rock-music format just as this type of music was acquiring a middle-class adult respectability. These more mature rock fans demanded a higher quality of audio reproduction; this transition parallelled a boom in the manufacture and sale of stereo sound equipment.

FM stations began to compete with, and in some cases eventually eclipse, their AM counterparts. In Toronto, for example, CHUM-FM switched from a classical format in 1968 to what its programmers termed "progressive rock", which distinguished it from the more commercial forms of rock music played on CHUM's sister AM station. Eventually CHUM-FM became more commercial, surpassed the AM station in ratings, and, in 1985, became the top-rated radio station in Toronto (and, thus, Canada, since Toronto is the country's largest market).

Recently, as the population bulge referred to as "baby boomers" aged, stations changed their formats to reflect the tastes of this commercially desirable group. CHUM-AM, for example, recently abandoned its "top-forty" format for the "gold" format hit songs from the 1960s and 1970s. This trend has alarmed many within the music recording industry. They believe that this programming reliance on older hit songs will reduce exposure for new groups and styles of music. Others believe that programming "gold" is a short-lived fad, which will end when listeners become bored with the constant repetition of older music.

One thing is certain: radio's lower costs, especially in production and in audience delivery, have provided it with a certain amount of insulation from the economic "realities" that exist in the television industry. Its simple technology, somewhat consistent market, and low costs give radio a greater degree of flexibility to respond to changing demographics and to meet its audience's interests more easily than can other media. Some small-town radio stations can operate for a year on what it costs to produce a single half-hour situation comedy on prime-time television.

WHY SHOULD STUDENTS STUDY RADIO?

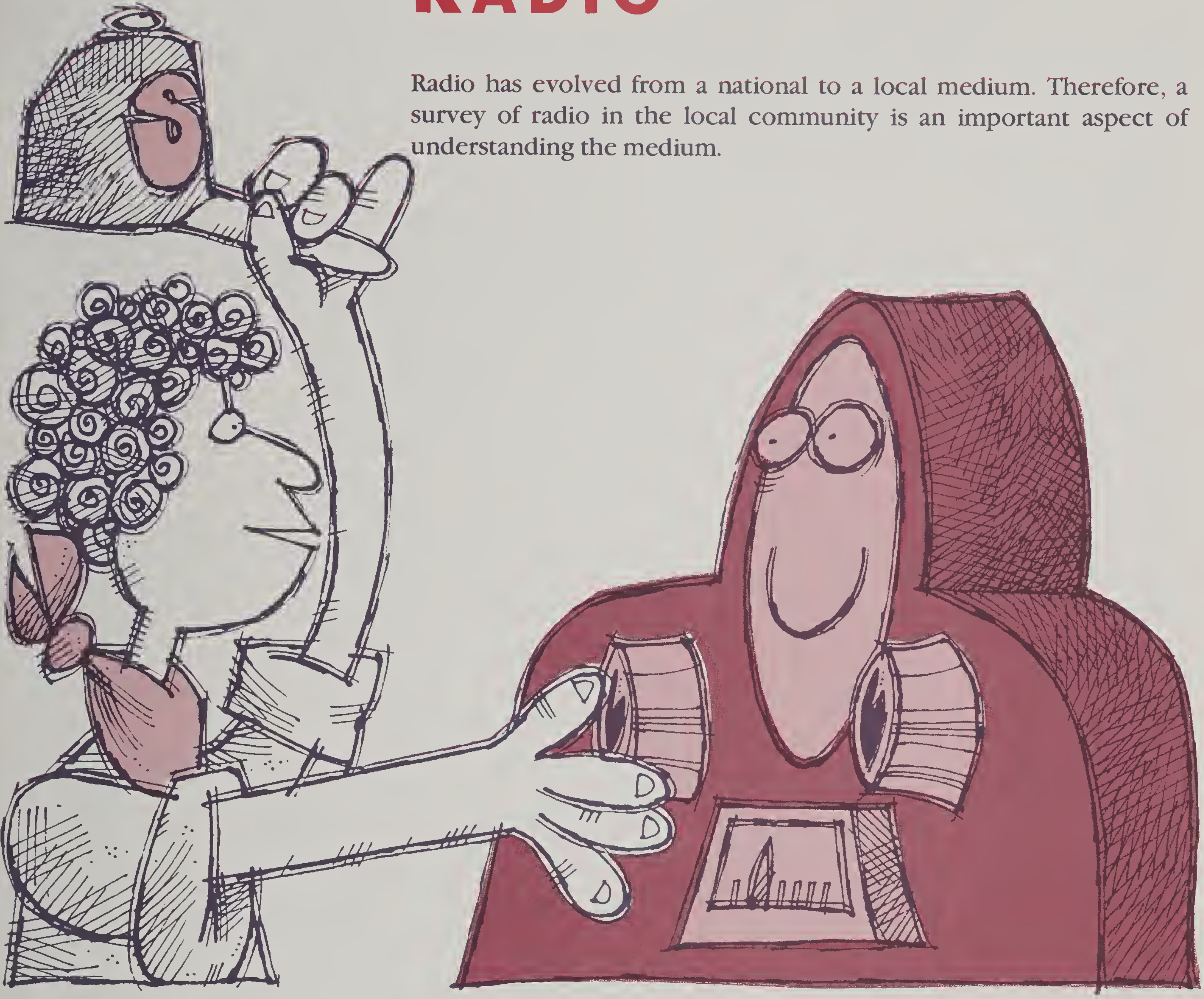
Radio probably has the least status of all the major mass media. Consequently, media-literacy teachers tend to give it short shrift. Television, after all, is more pervasive and influential, and its advertising is more manipulative and value-laden. Movies are more exciting and glamorous. Print is already in the schools, and many teachers are more comfortable with it because of its familiarity. Finally, radio is primarily seen as a purveyor of popular music, and while popular music is very important to students, it does originate in another medium.

So why bother to study radio? Several reasons come to mind:

1. Much popular music is popular simply because it receives a lot of air time on radio. In spite of the proliferation of rock videos, music is still primarily an audio medium. This cross-media relationship deserves scrutiny.
2. Many adolescents spend far more time listening to radio than they do attending to any other medium.
3. Radio has its own unique construction of reality. Listening to a record album for an hour is not the same experience as listening to radio for the same amount of time. These differences need to be explored.
4. Television's roots are in radio. In the late 1940s and early 1950s it was the radio networks that seized the opportunity to develop television. Radio's formats, genres, and personalities were transferred to the new medium, and an understanding of this process is necessary in order to appreciate the impact of television today.
5. Students are fascinated by the historical aspects of radio. The famous "War of the Worlds" broadcast, for example, is of intense interest to adolescents who face a future that includes the possibility of thermonuclear war.
6. Radio dramatizations, particularly in the adventure and horror genres, have as much impact today as when they were first broadcast, and they are readily available in bookstores. W.O. Mitchell's *Jake and the Kid* (Toronto: Seal Books, 1982) is a good example of radio dramatization.
7. The study and creation of radio programs require a minimal capital outlay, and tape recorders are also readily available in most schools.
8. In certain circumstances, such as power blackouts and natural disasters, radio once again takes a place at the forefront of the mass media. Its portability and compactness and the speed with which it delivers news and on-the-spot voice reports from any part of the globe give it clear advantages over television.

GETTING TO KNOW RADIO

Radio has evolved from a national to a local medium. Therefore, a survey of radio in the local community is an important aspect of understanding the medium.

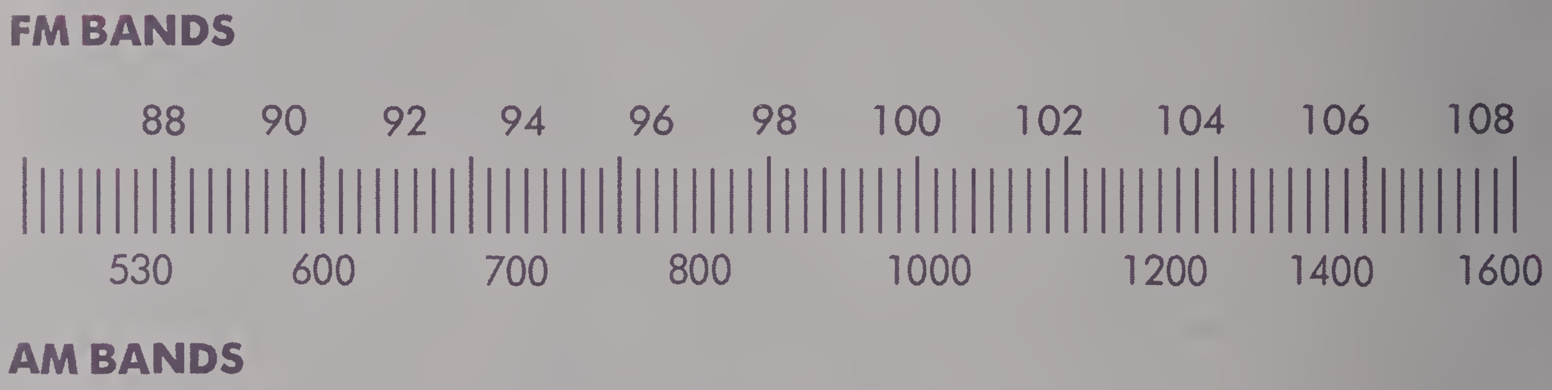


1. Students are often surprised at the extent to which the media are a presence in their lives. This first survey is intended to quantify the amount of time that they, their friends, and their families spend with the radio.
   a) Have students draw up a questionnaire designed to elicit such information as (i) the number, age, and sex of the people in a household, (ii) the number of radios in the household (including car radios), (iii) the stations listened to by members of the family, and (iv) the times during which the radio is on.

b) Students can complete the survey themselves or administer it to others. In the latter case, encourage them to obtain information from adults of different ages as well as students in different grades.

c) When students have completed their data collection, they can make charts in which they compile the statistical information gathered and discuss such questions as the following: Can listeners be grouped according to age? To what extent do musical tastes tend to reflect age groups? Would members of one group object to the musical tastes of another group? Why or why not?

2. a) Have students prepare a list of the radio stations that broadcast to the local community. This list should include each station's frequency on the band, its call letters, and its format. Provide students with preprinted forms that include reproductions of the bands as in the accompanying illustrations. Provide outline maps of the province of Ontario and have students identify the broadcast point of origin for each station on their list.



b) Divide the class into groups and assign each group a mix of station formats, including country-and-western, easy-listening, rock-music, experimental, educational, and all-news stations. (Note that students will tend to choose their favourites and ignore the other stations if they are not forced to examine different formats in this way.) Each group should prepare listening logs for the stations they have been assigned. These logs should be based on at least two hours of listening spread over several days and at different times of the day. The logs should include the following information: (i) the titles of the songs played and their performers; (ii) the names, personalities, and styles of the disc jockeys; (iii) a list of advertised products; (iv) a list of public-service announcements; (v) the frequency of newscasts (number and nature of news items); (vi) the use of contests, phone-in requests, give-aways, and any other promotional techniques by the station.

Once the logs are completed, have the groups answer the following questions for each of their stations:

- What are the age, sex, and income level of the majority of the station's listeners?
- What is the proportion of music to advertising and disc-jockey "chatter"?
- What kind of news stories does the station concentrate on?
- Are editorial opinions expressed on air? By whom? Do these opinions reflect an apparent political bias?
- Who owns the radio station? Does the owner live in the community?

Have each group present its findings in a formal presentation to the rest of the class.

3. a) Local radio stations might allow a class to tour their facilities. If a tour can be arranged, help students prepare a series of questions to ask the various personnel in the station (e.g., station managers, disc jockeys) to find out how they arrange their programs, select their music, and schedule their advertising. If a class visit is not possible, try to arrange telephone interviews.

   b) Ask local stations for any promotional material that they may have prepared. Discuss with students what this material indicates about the characteristics of the targeted audience.

   c) If any of the stations in the local area have undergone a format change in recent years, have students find out why this change occurred.

4. *Radio and travel.* Because of the portability of radio, it has always served as a diversion for travellers.

   a) Have your students investigate the Canadian National Railway's use of radio in the 1920s. What did the railway hope to accomplish with its broadcasts? Even though the railways are no longer the primary mode of travel, how do the CNR and CPR use the media today?

   b) How important is radio in automobiles? How has technology accommodated the development of the car radio?

   c) Ask students how they use personal stereos. They should consider the role that setting (e.g., a bus, a cafeteria) plays in their choice of radio stations or type of music.

   d) What are some other ways in which the mass media in general and radio in particular may be used in the travel industry?

5. *Radio and the news.* Most students pay little attention to radio news. Statistical research tells us that the majority of Canadians get their news from television, although most radio stations provide regular newscasts.

a) Obtain a tape of the radio news report broadcast by Chicago reporter Herb Morrison during the explosion of the airship *Hindenberg* in 1937. (This tape is listed in most catalogues of old radio broadcasts and is included in many records of historic audio.) Have students compare it to news reports of the explosion of the space shuttle *Challenger* in 1986. They can find such reports in newspapers and periodicals such as *Maclean's* and *Time*, which are available on microfilm. Are there any similarities?

b) Radio provides us with a good example of how various programming formats can shape the quality and style of a news program. Since all media codify reality in special ways, a close look at how various news programs handle similar news items can reveal the special nature of the medium of radio in interpreting real-life events. Organize students into small groups and have each group analyse a different news broadcast. Students can focus on either one time slot (e.g., the "six o'clock" news) or one station at different time periods in order to see how the news format changes. Each group prepares a report for the class based on the following elements:

- the length and frequency of the broadcast
- the tone of the news reader (strident, aggressive, relaxed)
- the scope of the coverage of individual items
- the agenda or the importance given to items by their sequencing
- the use and frequency of use of correspondents
- the inclusion of interview segments
- the use of editorial comments and their location within the newscast
- the source of the news

6. *The role of the CBC.* While many teachers are loyal listeners to CBC radio, our students remain generally indifferent to its diverse offerings. This is unfortunate, because they are ignoring the prime source of some of the most stimulating and dynamic uses of the medium of radio anywhere in the world. You could start by subscribing to the CBC *Radio Guide* (Box 320, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 9Z9).

a) Have students work in small groups to consider a week of programs on CBC radio. The following types of programming should be included in the study:

- music, including a variety of types
- comedy (e.g., The Royal Canadian Air Farce)
- the news, particularly "The World at Six"
- phone-in shows (e.g., "Radio Noon", "Cross-Canada Checkup")
- interview and public-affairs shows (e.g., "Morningside", "Sunday Morning", "As It Happens")
- sound documentaries (e.g., "Ideas")

What did each group learn from listening to its area of programming?

b) Have students interview adults who are loyal fans of specific CBC programs and report to the class on the benefits that people derive from these programs.

c) Have students discuss or debate the observation on program balance in the following quotation:

> Like many other Canadians, we applaud the achievements of CBC radio. The CBC radio networks perform a unique and irreplaceable service for the nation. In part, because it has traditionally faced no competition from American radio and in part because program costs are relatively modest, CBC radio is cast in a flattering light when compared to its beleaguered television counterpart. In fact, radio has been successful in doing what television has not – creating service that is unmistakeably Canadian and celebrated for being as good as any radio service in the world. It has achieved that most elusive of goals: striking a balance between popular programming, including survival information, comedy, sports and so on, and programming for a range of minority tastes, in classical music, jazz, documentaries and drama.
>
> *The Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy* (Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1986)

d) Discuss the following quotation with the class, in the light of students' investigations of radio to this point:

> If the issue of Canadian identity is less an obsession than it was twenty or thirty years ago, it's because the CBC has been providing us with an accurate mirror in which to see and know ourselves. No other Canadian institution comes close to doing as good a job.
>
> Morris Wolfe, "Happy Birthday CBC!", in *Radio Guide*, vol. VI, no. 11 (November 1986), page 18

Ask students in what ways CBC radio can be regarded as a vital national link that helps Canadians to communicate with each other.

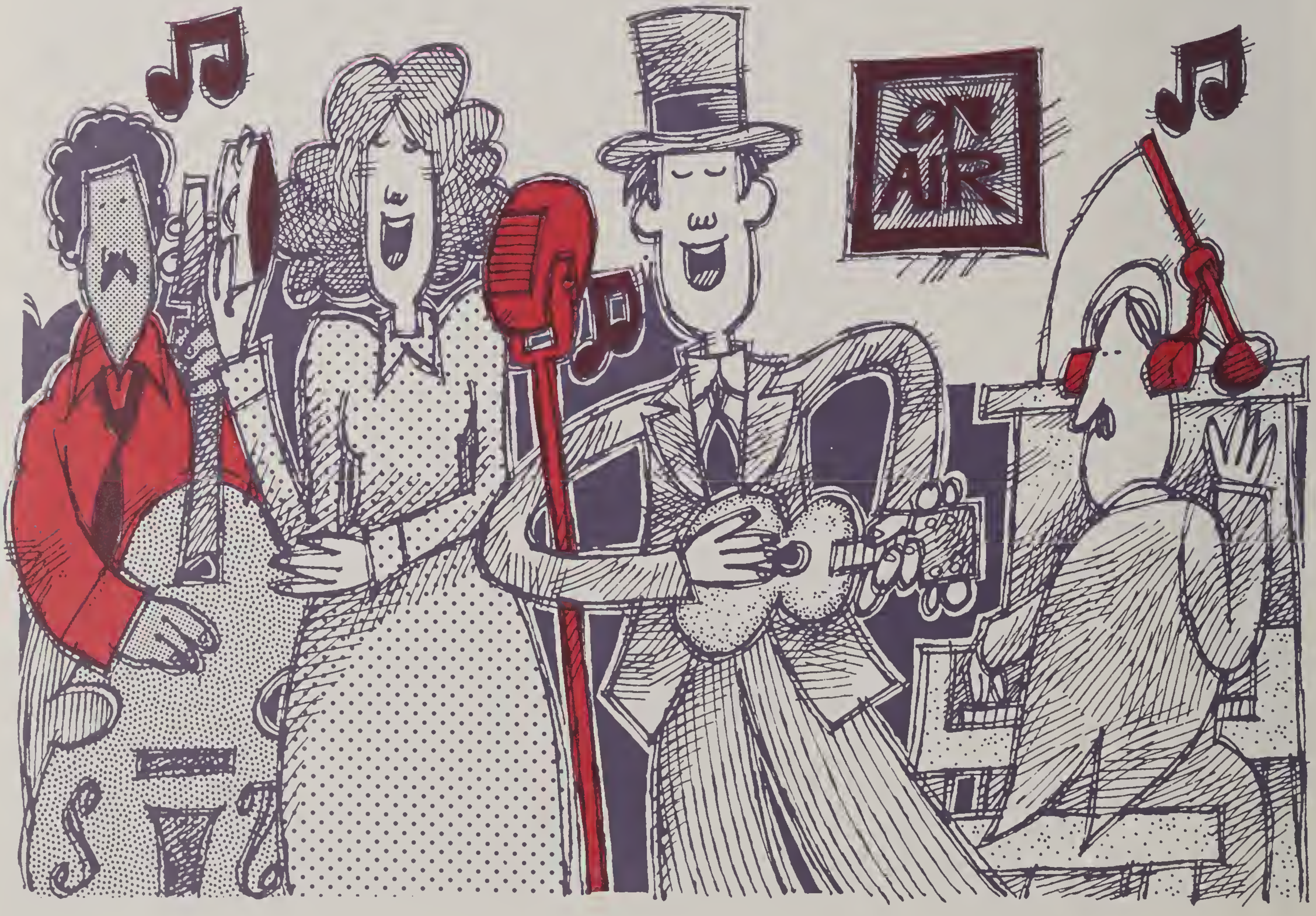
e) Depending on students' interests, the following topics can serve as the focus for specialized investigations:

- The art of comedy in "The Royal Canadian Air Farce"
- CBC radio drama – striving for a theatre of the mind
- The art of skilful interviewing in CBC interview programs
- The art of sound documentaries
- "Ideas" programs: making intellectually challenging ideas into interesting, worthwhile listening experiences

RADIO'S GOLDEN AGE

An astonishing variety of programs from radio's golden age are on tape and easily available. The following sources are suggested:

- public library record and tape collections
- the "nostalgia" or "spoken-word" section of record stores (The bigger the store, the better the selection of this kind of material. While bookstores are a good source of old radio programs, old-time radio dramatizations should not be confused with modern "books on cassette", in which an author or an actor reads passages from the original book.)
- used-record stores and sales
- catalogues of companies that provide audio-visual software to schools
- parents' or grandparents' record collections



1. Plan a selection of old-time radio programs for your class. Divide the class into groups and make each group responsible for presenting a different genre of radio programming. Have the groups research the following questions:
   - Why did radio become so popular in the early 1920s?
   - When did commercials begin, and what effect did they have on radio programming?
   - How did radio programs change between the 1920s and the 1940s?
   - What were the most popular program genres during this period? What are the most popular genres on television today? Explain the similarities and differences.
   - Is television an improvement over early radio? Why or why not?
   - What advantages does early radio have over television?
   - Which entertainers and programs made the transition from radio to television? Are any of them still popular today?

2. Most students are fascinated by the circumstances surrounding the Mercury Theater's 1938 dramatization of H.G. Well's novel *War of the Worlds*. Teachers can easily obtain copies of the original broadcast, which can be used in a variety of ways.

   a) Have students compare the radio play with the novel (written in 1908) and the film (produced in 1953). All of them were considered superior examples of their genres, yet there are significant differences among them. Have students consider the changes that occurred from the novel to the radio play and film, and how they are explained by the nature of each medium and the time that they were made.

   b) Have students research the social effects of the radio broadcast. Suggested sources include contemporary newspaper accounts, books on the history of radio, and biographies of Orson Welles and John Houseman, two of the principal architects of the broadcast.

   c) Have students research historical events that occurred in 1938 that could explain why so many radio listeners thought that the dramatization was not fictional.

   d) Ask students to consider how the radio play compares with contemporary films for television such as *Special Bulletin* and *The Day After*, which dramatize the effects of nuclear war. (Could a modern audience be fooled in the same way that people were in 1938? How?)

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

1. Extend students' understanding of the power of radio by having them create a three- to five-minute "sound collage". Students write a short script to elicit one of the following emotional responses: horror, love, despair, exhilaration, fear. Alternatively, students might focus on a theme or message (e.g., nuclear war, alienation, insanity, romance, the need to be "somebody").

   In order to challenge their creativity and to help them learn about the nature of the medium of sound, ask students to include in some part of the tape the following elements of sound: music, natural sound effects, spoken words, intervals of silence. The sounds should be appropriately mixed, with fades, dissolves, and overdubs being used. The production stages that students should go through are as follows: collecting material on cassette or tape; structuring the material in script form by establishing rhythm, contrasts, timing, and transitions; mixing; criticizing; revising; and performing the completed tape.

   Consult with an audio-visual technician about the availability of equipment (e.g., microphones, record players, tape recorders, mixers) before beginning this assignment. Check with students; they may surprise you with what they have at home.

2. If students are successful with their sound collages and are competent and comfortable working in this medium, then the next step is to produce an original radio drama patterned after the dramas from radio's golden era. In the language arts such an activity will cover the requirements of reading, writing, listening, and speaking and will also provide a great deal of creative fun for students. The completion of the sound collages should provide you with an indication of the relative strengths and weaknesses of individual class members and allow you to form appropriate groups. Students will be required to assume the following roles:

   Writers. Radio drama usually follows a basic formula, which students can use as a guide rather than a blueprint. The formula includes the following elements:

   - an action-packed opening and closing
   - a theme song
   - sound effects and catch phrases
   - a hero
   - minor supporting characters
   - a powerful announcer
   - a simple plot

- dramatic breaks for commercials

Sound effects should be spelled out in the script. Where sound effects cannot fully describe the scene, the announcer can do so. It is important, in a first effort of this type, to keep the plot simple and to stress action and uncomplicated sound effects.

Director. Every moment of the production and performance should be supervised by the director, who must harmonize the characters, sound effects, and moods.

Announcer. Announcers played major roles in radio productions. They introduced the programs and stars, read commercials, sometimes acted as straight men for comedians, and "warmed up" the studio audience. The announcer should obviously have a good, strong voice.

Actors. Have the actors audition on a tape recorder and allow other members of the class to help make the decisions regarding who is best for each role.

Sound-effects technicians. The sound-effects people should first make a list of all the sounds required in the play and then tape them in the order in which they will be needed. This group will also be responsible for playing the theme song or other music.

Have students rehearse each scene and, when you think the crew is ready, have them tape the results.

3. The following news-simulation activity will reinforce students' knowledge of the radio formats and news styles that were introduced in the previous exercise. Develop a series of imagined news events or work from current events. Working in small groups, students are to script a three- to five-minute newscast and role-play its development. They should include the following roles and functions of a radio news team in their performance:

- the radio station manager, who makes the final decision
- the news writer, who writes the copy to suit the programming style and policies of the station
- the news reader, whose tone and delivery is determined by the station format and the time period of the broadcast

If sufficient resources are available, each group should be given a chance to record its final product onto audiotape to be played to the class for feedback and discussion.

RADIO AND THE OTHER MEDIA

A mass medium should not be examined in isolation from other media, and radio is no exception to this rule.

1. Have students discuss the following: What connections are there between radio and other media, such as television, newspapers, magazines, and movies? Are any of these media advertised on radio and vice versa? Are there any differences in the characteristics of the audience for each medium?

2. The most important cross-media connection is, of course, between radio and the music industry. Have students consider the following questions:
   - How do radio stations decide what music to play?
   - Can a record become a hit without extensive radio play?
   - Does the trend towards programming older hit songs mean that new groups and musicians will not get air time? Will listeners become weary of listening to the same hit songs again and again? If so, what effect will this have on radio programming?
   - Do rock videos compete with radio? Will the visual dimension eventually win out over radio in the same way as television did forty years ago? Do rock videos help the radio medium in any way?

3. During radio's golden age, the medium often presented hour-long dramatizations of current movies complete with the original cast. Obtain a recording of one of these broadcasts and have students compare it with the film. Ask them to suggest why dramatizations of this type are not done on television.

4. The four functions of the mass media are to entertain, to inform, to influence, and to make money. Discuss these with the class, using questions such as the following: Which of these functions can radio perform better than the other media? How well do you feel that radio performs these functions? How could the medium improve its performance? What additional functions, if any, do you think it could or should perform?

5. Have students examine the differences between radio and television by comparing a broadcast of a portion of a televised hockey game with one that is carried on a local radio station. Ensure that some of the following questions are considered in the discussion that follows:

   - How well does the radio announcer conjure up key images of play? Do students visualize the positions of players on the ice during a rush at the net?
   - How does the inclusion of replays affect the television version? What do the radio announcers do as a substitute for replays?
   - Which medium relies more on statistics in its broadcast?
   - Is there more bias in the commentary in one medium than in the other?
   - How do the commentators from each medium handle a fight on the ice?

   Students can do a similar comparison of news broadcasts of special events (e.g., a royal wedding, parades, election results) on the two media.

6. We take the media so much for granted that we find it hard to imagine what life would be like without them. Thus, it is useful to have students consider what effects the withdrawal of a medium would have.

   a) Have the class consider the following questions:
   - What impact would the end of radio have on other mass media?
   - How many jobs would be lost, not just in the medium, but in dependent industries?
   - How would the demise of the medium affect your private and social life?

   b) Have students write an essay in which they describe the social, economic, and political effects of the end of radio.

   c) Technically minded students could write a science-fiction story in which the end of the medium has to be explained in a way that is technologically plausible.

Popular Music and Rock Video

All you really have that really matters are feelings. That's what music is to me. . . . That's what this music is all about. It's about feeling. It's about wanting. It's about needing and cramming yourself full of it.

Janis Joplin

OVERVIEW

Art is the means by which a society communicates its truths, values, and aspirations to itself. The only form of art that can be said to "belong" to young people is popular music. It has served as the primary communication medium for youth culture since the early fifties and is central as both a reflector and a shaper of adolescent consciousness.

The early rock music of the fifties, a combination of Black rhythm and blues with white country music, had a raw, driving sound and, with its intimations of sexuality and delinquency, was part of a new definition of youth. The fusion of early rock music with folk music, with its more meaningful lyrics and protest content, produced the consciously revolutionary rock music of the late sixties and early seventies. Out of the ashes of that movement arose the anarchism and negativism of the punk music of the eighties. Although young listeners have been attracted by the music's attempt to delineate a counterculture, there is a tension in the relationship between the music itself and the industry that produces it. The music industry has always been determined to homogenize the music and make it palatable for a mass audience.

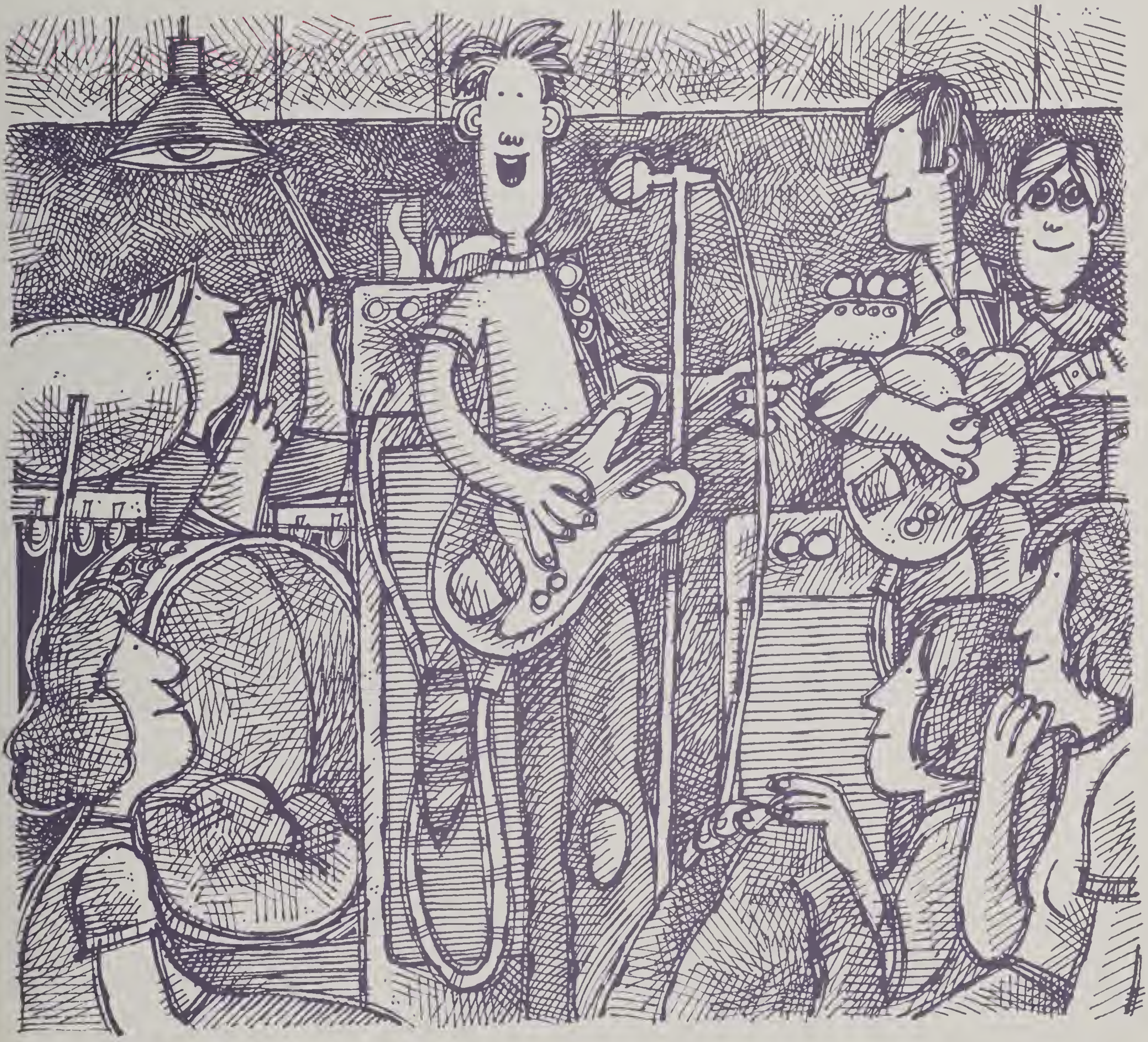
Popular music's influence has soared with every technological advance (the phonograph, the radio, television, the personal cassette recorder). The most recent development has been the music video, commonly called *rock video*, which fuses music with video images. Rock video's success depends on its ability to give a face to a voice, an image to a sound, and the stature of a minidrama to a three-minute song. This new art form has quickly become one of the most influential and widely consumed mass media in the country.

Each technological advance has increased the profit-making potential of popular music. The recording industry is now the biggest entertainment industry in the world, grossing well over $5.5 billion in North America alone. It is an industry for which marketing and distribution are far more problematic than production. Thus, the selling of pop stars and the packaging and promoting of pop music have become big business, with more money going into promotion than into the production of the record itself. The target of most of this promotion is teenagers, who form the bulk of the recording industry's market.

The advent of rock video has increased the financial stakes. Rock videos are advertisements for rock groups and their records, but with a difference. Whereas advertising agencies usually have to pay for time "on air", the recording industry can secure time slots on video programs without having to pay a price. Audiences want rock-music stations, and the stations need the rock videos. Consumers now feel that a record is not enough: they expect a video that will tell them how the band looks, dresses, and plays. The rock video is now an essential element of the record package.

Only the most influential pop stars produce their own videos and maintain artistic control over them; most recording artists have little input into what happens to their music on the screen. The cost of a rock video, covered by the recording company, can range from $6000 to $120 000 and is generally much more than the cost of the production of the song itself.

A pop music band wanting to sign a record contract will prepare a short "demo" tape for distribution to record companies. If the group is lucky, or persistent, or, more likely, has outside influence, someone working in artist development for a company will develop enough interest to see the band perform and to promote it within the company. If successful, the band will sign a contract with the record company, seldom for under three years' duration, and will prepare a debut album.



After a number of songs have been completed, one of them will be chosen for release as a single and a rock video. The record company will hire a video producer to work on the project. Together with the promotional wing of the record company, the producer will develop the video concept. It does not have to relate too closely to the song and often adds layers of meaning to the original music.

The formula for rock videos is usually quite predictable. Generally, it features the band members lip-synching to the music while a narrative and art concept weaves its way through the visuals. A typical rock video has all the elements of an advertisement: a breakneck pace of cuts, plenty of visual "hooks", and an emphasis on a lush and luxurious lifestyle.

Popular music has had a major impact not only on youth but also on society as a whole. It was a major force in such social phenomena as the development of the drug culture and the opposition to the Vietnam War. Perhaps the largest media event in history, the Live Aid Concert (described as a "global juke box"), was built around popular music and the response of young people to global problems.

What rock video has done is to strengthen the ability of performers to convey a total image. Pop-music consumers, as a result of rock videos, now know more about their favourite pop stars – their dress, hair, costumes, accents, movements – than ever before. This has strengthened the loyalties of consumers and splintered pop consumers into fixed groups. The majority of rock-video viewers are young people, between the ages of nine and thirteen.

The potential for this new art form remains great. The combination of music with dramatic or imaginative visual material is a potent one, and there are many contemporary examples of rock videos that have used the form in a fresh and inventive way. Unfortunately, high production costs have ensured that, for the most part, the artistic possibilities of rock videos have remained subordinate to their commercial uses. With media-literacy skills, students can develop a discriminating response to this medium, exploring both the positive and negative aspects of its aesthetics and values.

In dealing with popular music and rock video, it is essential to begin with students' own experiences, before moving towards a deeper understanding of the content and typical forms found in the products of the industry. The material can then be placed in a variety of wider contexts – social, economic, ideological, or historical. To encompass a good range of activities, teachers should select activities from a number of different areas in the following subsections.

GETTING STARTED

In spite of the domination of the music industry by big business, students do feel that it is their music and their popular culture, and teachers should, therefore, avoid the tendency to be negative in dealing with it. This is one area in which most students will be far more familiar with the subject matter than are their teachers, and they will readily express themselves quite freely. However, popular music is not as homogeneous a field as it once was: students tend to splinter into groups according to the variety of music to which they are loyal; it is rare to have a class consensus. This problem can be overcome, however, by a structuring of discussion to examine similarities and differences within the field and by an exploration of the reasons for such intense loyalties.

1. The following are some questions that can be used to initiate discussion among students:
   - What are some of the different types of popular music, and how do they differ in their lyrics, melody, and beat?
   - Why are young people so intensely loyal to their favourite music (and antagonistic to other types)?
   - What role does popular music play in your life? How does it influence your friendships? Does it give you a sense of identity?
   - Why do young people think that popular music and rock videos "belong" to them? To what extent is this belief true?
   - What feelings, needs, and wants of young people are communicated by the music, by the lyrics, and by the images of a specific rock video?
2. If students have difficulty accepting the musical tastes of others, encourage them to role-play the behaviours of persons loyal to their own and other forms of music. Some students may want to use parody in their depictions.

3. There are other possible "entry points" into students' world of popular music and rock video. Some of the following questions may prove useful. You might wish to present them in the form of a questionnaire.
   - How much time do you spend each day listening to popular music? Where do you listen? Do you listen to radio or recorded music? What radio stations do you usually listen to? Why? Who are your favourite DJs? What do you like about them? Do you use a headset or speakers when you listen to music? Why? Are you usually alone or with friends? What are your reasons for listening? Do you have different reasons at different times? Do you like the music loud or soft? What difference does it make? How does the music make you feel? What are some of the things you have learned from music? How much money do you spend on records or tapes in a month?
   - How often do you watch rock videos? How much time do you spend watching them? Why do you watch rock videos? How do they make you feel? Do you watch alone or with others? What are some of the things you have learned from watching rock videos?
   - Do you ever go to rock concerts? How often? How is the experience of a live concert different from recorded music or rock videos? How important a part of the experience is the media "hype" and the anticipation? The visual spectacle?

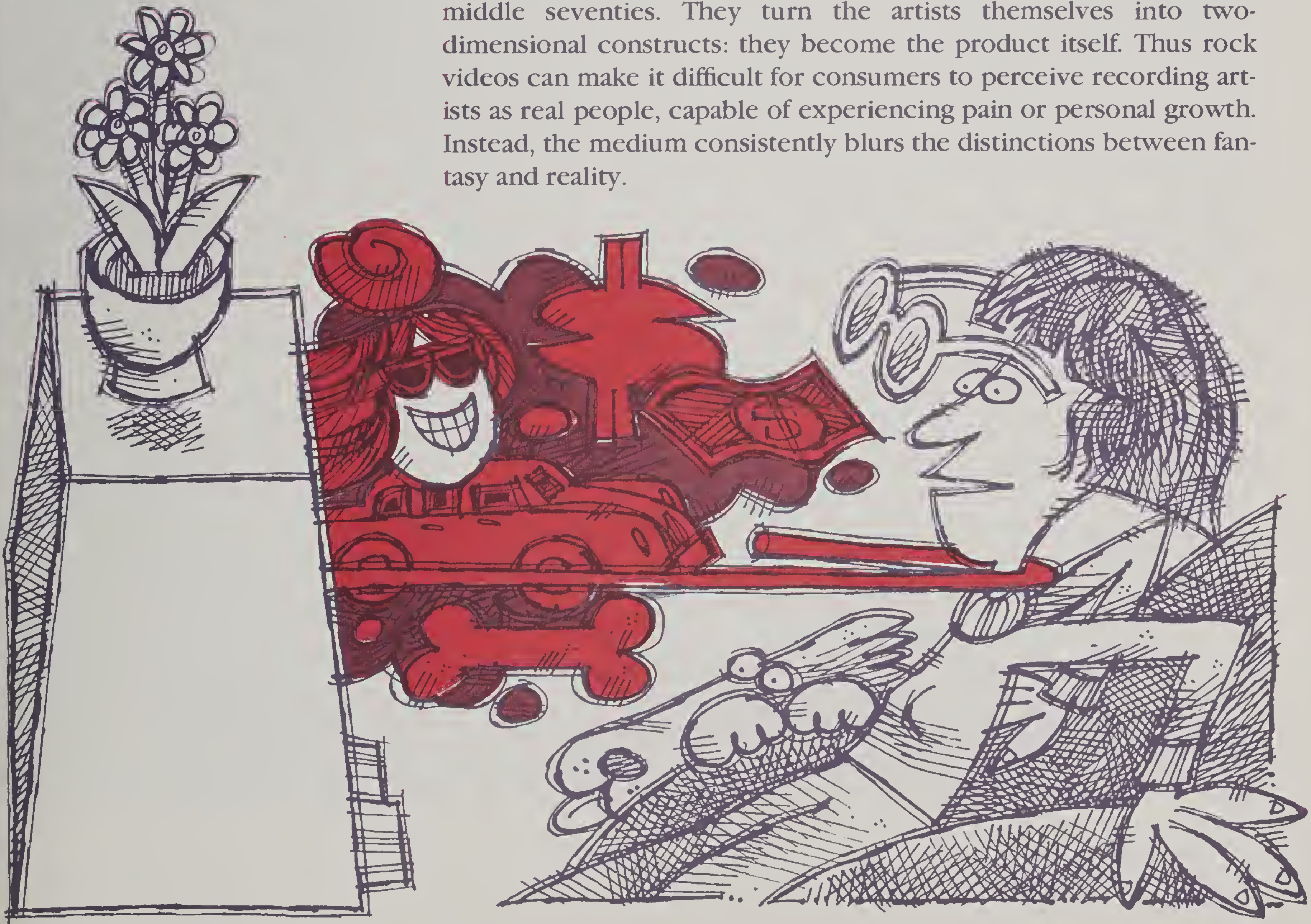
4. Students could prepare a list of their personal "top ten" records and explain their reasons for their selection to the rest of the class. A class "top ten" list can be compiled. Are there differences between the list of female and male students?

5. Ask students to identify their favourite pop stars or groups, explaining why they like them. Again, a male-female division could prove interesting. A useful extension could be to ask students to name some rock stars whom they liked in the past but who are no longer popular and to explain why they think their popularity has declined. Students could also be asked to explain why some singers remain popular for years.

CONSTRUCTING REALITY

The lyrics of popular music have always played a major role in the construction of reality, particularly in the area of romance and love, and have influenced such associated constructs as masculinity, femininity, and the relationship between the sexes. These constructs are enhanced and intensified by the elements of rock video. The music contains melodic catch phrases called "hooks", the images are slickly designed, and the length, only three minutes on average, limits the images to intense flashes and impressions. The result is a product that tends towards a construct that often reinforces sex roles, legitimizes violence, and stereotypes race as well.

Through rock videos, the pop star's life is presented as one of wealth and pleasure. Like advertisements, rock videos promote a product, but they also promote the value of consumption. In the process of conveying the never-never land of the pop star, rock videos complete the process begun by the recording industry in the middle seventies. They turn the artists themselves into two-dimensional constructs: they become the product itself. Thus rock videos can make it difficult for consumers to perceive recording artists as real people, capable of experiencing pain or personal growth. Instead, the medium consistently blurs the distinctions between fantasy and reality.



1. Students view a number of rock videos and then, in groups, discuss the following and report their conclusions to the class, supporting those conclusions with references to specific videos: If you were an intelligent creature from another planet and you formed your ideas about earth from a study of rock videos, what would your ideas likely be about:

   - what people look like?
   - what our dwelling places are like?
   - where most people in the world live?
   - wealth, poverty, and average standards of living?
   - how people earn their living, what work is, and what the necessities of life are?
   - how people spend their leisure time and the pace of life on earth?
   - the relationship between men and women?
   - what women are like, what men are like, and how they differ?
   - the relationships between parents and children?
   - how *love* and *romance* are defined?
   - what constitutes happiness for people?
   - how we deal with old people?
   - the role of violence in our lives?
   - the nature of the political process and the image of politicians?
   - the spiritual life and values of humans – what they worship, most desire, aspire to, or most fear?

   In a follow-up discussion students can discuss the accuracy of the impressions created and whether or not they would like other creatures to have such an image of their planet. Finally, they can consider what the effects of such constructs of reality are on children and young people. They should also attempt to understand why such constructs are presented so consistently.

   Students can also complete this exercise by imagining themselves as people from a developing country, rather than as aliens. Their responses can also be dramatized or written, rather than reported orally.

2. Students choose two musical groups and analyse the lyrics of two or three of their songs about relationships. They then compare the groups' views and values regarding love and romance and the nature of the relationships between men and women that are portrayed.

3. Students examine and categorize the images of women in a variety of rock videos, identify common patterns, and suggest reasons for them. This should involve them in exploration, research, and discussion.

4. Students examine the role of the video jockey on rock-video shows: a continuous live presence that creates the illusion of an ongoing dialogue with the audience. Why is this necessary? How does it affect the way rock videos are perceived? (Perhaps this can be related to the importance of the presence of the audience on television as opposed to film.)

5. Have students identify the influences of rock videos on their presentation of themselves (e.g., hair and clothing styles). Why do we find large numbers of "clones" of popular rock stars?

6. Rock stars cultivate or fabricate an elaborate stage persona, reinforced by costumes and technical effects and enhanced by media hype. Have students brainstorm to generate a list of the myths, qualities, and values associated with two or three of the most popular rock stars. Discuss with the class the reason for each persona and its effect on the audience.

7. Discuss the following questions with the class:
   - What characters are consistently mocked, criticized, or presented as unattractive in rock videos?
   - "Love doesn't play well on television, but lust does." Why? Is this particularly true of rock videos? Why?
   - What are the dreamlike qualities of rock videos on television?

DECODING: CONTENT, VALUES, AESTHETICS

1. The class should view a number of student-selected, teacher-previewed rock videos and select a few for detailed analysis. One of the best methods to start a discussion of a specific rock video is to ask students to identify the major visual images in the video and to list these on the chalkboard. In this way the class will be able to see the variety of levels on which the rock video is communicating. (This method avoids the "I like it" or "I hate it" kind of instant reaction.) The content of the lyrics should also be examined, and the class should decide whether or not they carry any significant meaning.

   Students should then move on to examine such technical and artistic issues as the use of colour, lights, camera angles, camera movement, editing (pace, juxtaposition, cutting on the beat), and special effects, and the unity of audio and video materials. They should attempt to assess the impact of these on the video. They should examine and discuss such issues as sex roles, the presentation of male and female images, political statements, violence, and racism as they arise. They should also identify the techniques used to convey power, dominance, and sexual attractiveness or to create negative impressions. Attention should be given to the freshness and creativity of the theme and its visual treatment or, conversely, its use of hackneyed material and visual clichés (e.g., smoke, mirrors, snakes). The discussion should leave students in a better position to assess the content, values, and artistry of the video.

   After a number of videos have been dealt with in this way, students could be asked to focus on their similarities and differences and to establish different categories for different videos. (Some categories that critics have found useful are performance, non-performance, narrative, non-narrative, and concept video.)

2. Show one segment of Walt Disney's *Fantasia* (particularly suitable might be the opening, set to Bach's Toccata and Fugue in G; this sequence is often available in 16 mm in films on the history of animation). Ask students to identify the method that has been used to turn the sound into image. Play a piece of music and ask students to draw pictures of what they hear (colour and shapes will do). Compare the Disney segment with some rock videos.

3. Ask students to select one popular song and to study its lyrics. They can then play the song and discuss ways in which their impressions of it are affected by the melody. Show the rock video of the song and discuss it further. Students should attempt to decide what elements are added to the song at each stage.

4. Have students identify a rock video with which they are quite familiar. Ask them to quote the lyrics from memory. Ask them to reconstruct the visuals from memory. Which have they remembered most vividly? Why? Does this vary for different students?

5. Have students watch, without sound, a rock video with which they are unfamiliar and then try to decide what the song is about.

6. Have students analyse the lyrics of a "concept" album and discuss the compatibility of the music and the lyrics.

7. Ask students to count the "jolts" (see pp. 4 and 45) in a variety of rock videos and then compare their findings for rock videos with those for sitcoms, cop shows, commercials, or scenes from feature films. They should suggest explanations for their results.

8. Pop music's structure has a formula: verse, chorus, verse, chorus, break, chorus. (The "break" is a short vocal section that breaks the pattern of the melodic and lyric structure; an instrumental break occurs when an instrument replaces the voice in the song.) Have students examine the lyrics of pop songs to find the pattern.

9. Have students select and analyse in detail two rock videos in each of the following categories:
   - videos that contain value messages of which they do not approve
   - videos that are outstanding in their artistry, avoiding clichés and using video and film techniques in fresh or innovative ways
   - videos that use clichéd imagery
   - videos that contain value messages of which they approve

10. Have students find rock videos that break the pattern or are atypical in some way. They should then explain how the video is atypical and suggest reasons why. (Is the group or an individual producer exerting control? Are the gimmicks simply more gory than usual? Are there differences between North American and British groups?)

11. Ask students to bring to class a copy of the lyrics of a song that they like and then write down the story of the song in their own words. They should also explain how the melody of the song contributes to the message expressed in the lyrics.

12. Ask students to name their favourite music video, describe briefly what happens in it, and explain why they like it, as well as why they think it might have helped the sales of the record involved. Have them describe the way in which the images in the video relate to the lyrics and melody of the record. They can then select a song that does not have a music video and describe the images that they would use to accompany the lyrics and melody.

13. Ask students to identify the melodic "hooks" used in a popular song.

MUSIC-INDUSTRY ECONOMICS

An effective media-literacy unit in this area should help students to explore the economic relationships between pop stars and the recording industry and between the industry and the consumer. Simulations or role-playing activities can be useful ways of making these relationships real for students. This is also a fruitful area for research activities.

1. Students simulate the roles of producer and advertising manager of a rock-video television station. They are told that research has shown that most rock-video viewers are between nine and thirteen years of age and that producers whose programs do not make money for the station lose their jobs. They are then required to address the following questions:

   - As advertising manager, what products would you attempt to have advertised on your program?
   - What kinds of appeals and techniques might you suggest be used to make these commercials effective?
   - As producer, what kind of video jockeys (VJs) would you get and what kind of atmosphere would you have them establish? What should they wear? What kind of a setting should they appear in?
   - What kind of play format would you establish (e.g., how many videos would be played in succession)?
   - What kind of mixture of old and new material, of fast and slow music, and of heavy metal and new wave music would you have?
   - How frequent and how long would commercial breaks be?
   - For how long would the VJ talk between videos?
   - How often would you have interviews, and how long would they be? Would you have live phone-ins?
   - How many hours a day of original material would you broadcast? Would you tape and repeat segments?
   - How large a crew would you require? How many VJs? How many cameras? What size studio?

   Students can discuss these questions in groups and then present their ideas to the class for further discussion and evaluation.

2. Have students simulate a promotional campaign for a rock group that has had some limited success but has not yet really become widely known. Different groups of students may be assigned to promote different types of groups (e.g., heavy metal, punk). Students make an oral presentation to the class, with supporting material (if desired), justifying the costs and effectiveness of the campaign. The class then discusses and assesses the plan.

3. Have students simulate the job of a public-relations manager for a very popular rock star. What information about the star would they release, plant, leak, suppress, or control?

4. You may wish to attempt a total music-industry simulation, in which all members of the class are assigned roles. These would include people involved in the industry (e.g., rock singers, agents, record-company producers, music television station producers and VJs, record-company album producers, music video producers, newspaper entertainment editors and critics) and consumers of rock videos (or other third parties) with a variety of interests and positions (e.g., children and teenagers from six to eighteen years of age, parents, immigrants from developing countries, members of the clergy, feminists, bikers, teachers). All students should be required to research their roles and to respond to the situation through either drama or writing (letters to the editor, critical reviews) or both.

5. Ask students to research the market for rock videos. (Who watches them?) Students may conduct a survey in their class or school to see who watches how much.

6. Have students contact a record company to explore how a record album is marketed. Students should be able to explain what target markets are and how the record package reflects them.

7. Ask students to research the costs of production of a song and of a rock video. They should obtain answers to the following questions: Which is greater? What do record companies hope to gain by investing in a rock video? How likely are they to do it for an unknown group?

8. Ask students to determine how groups become popular. (Is it through word of mouth, radio promotion, concerts, rock videos, or T-shirts?) Ask them where they first heard (or heard about) their favourite group.

MUSIC HISTORY: THE MUSICAL LANDSCAPE

This is an ideal area in which to involve students in individual or group research projects. There are a number of worthwhile possibilities.

1. Have students interview adults about the popular music of their youth and its effect on them and others. They should find someone who "loved" Frank Sinatra, "screamed" for Elvis, "dug" the Beatles or the Stones, or was "into" Bob Dylan. It will be useful for them to compare the impact of popular music on young people in the past with its impact on young people today. Students should write up their results or report on them orally to the class.

2. Students can trace the development of the technology of production and distribution of popular music, noting how new developments changed the music and also changed the relationships between musicians and the music industry, as well as the relationship between musicians and their audience.

3. Have students research the history of popular music. Especially useful in this regard is *The Rolling Stone Book of Rock Video* by Michael Shore (New York: Rolling Stone Press, 1984) and *The Role of Rock* by Don J. Hibbard and Carol Kaleialoha (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1983).

4. Have students research the history of rock video. (*The Rolling Stone Book of Rock Video* by Michael Shore is an especially good resource.) Students should note the relationship of rock video to other image-music partnerships (e.g., opera, ballet, Hollywood musicals, animated musicals such as Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, films such as Richard Lester's *A Hard Day's Night* and Nicholas Roeg's *Performance*, films about concerts, such as *Woodstock* and *Gimme Shelter*).

5. Explain the continued popularity of other varieties of music, such as country and western, folk, or jazz. Have students listen to examples of some of these and then describe the ways in which the lyrics, melodies, and rhythms vary among them and how they differ from other forms of popular music.

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

For some students much of the critical or analytic work done on rock videos will remain abstract and unassimilated unless they have actual opportunities to manipulate the material creatively in some way. This need not be a complex technical undertaking: often, simple scripting or storyboarding assignments are ideal solutions in this area.

1. Have the class choose a song that has not already been made into a video. Play the song as often as required. Have students talk about the way they imagine a video for the song would look. Allow them to explore the possibilities totally and encourage them to explain in vivid visual terms what the song means to them and how they would convey this to a video viewer.

   Discuss the different interpretations. Students should try to make a decision as to what might make the "best" video and give reasons for their decision. They should consider whether the more popular choices appear practical, given a typical industry budget of $100 000. (Have each shot they describe cost $1000.) They should look at the feasibility of producing the video treatment they have chosen, the production problems that they face, and ways of solving these problems.

   Divide the class into groups and have each group prepare all or a part of their visual interpretation of the song on a storyboard.

2. Have students create a slide-sound show, using one or more audio selections. The images should have a definite structure, although not necessarily a narrative one. Possible themes include architecture, people at work, colour patterns, and concepts such as "unusual people", crowding, or alienation. It should be noted that the sound is secondary, and therefore there should be no attempt at literal interpretation, which often proves awkward and unrealistic. The production stages that students should go through are as follows: concept definition, scripting, shooting, editing (selecting and sequencing), timing, and performance.

3. A variation on the previous activity can be accomplished by having students produce a graphic montage, using photographs from magazines set to music. The photographs could be turned into slides, and the production could proceed as in activity 2, or, if a video camera is available, the production could be videotaped.

4. Students can become creatively involved in existing rock videos. Have them create their own interpretation of a song of their own choosing by using elements of existing music videos. What aspects of the video images lend themselves to easy adaptations? How important is "lip-sync"? Are there "fast" and "slow" music images?

5. Have students script or storyboard a narrative or non-narrative rock video. If a rock video already exists for the song that students select, a good activity would be to compare the industry rock video to the student production, noting differences and similarities in content and narrative structure.

6. a) Have students write an original three-minute script for a rock video, using proper script form, that is, information on shots and special effects on the left and lyrics and action on the right. Students should be urged to take a fresh, non-sexist approach, to avoid the typical rock-video clichés, and to create something original and aesthetically pleasing.

   b) Have students design a set and plan an efficient shooting schedule for a scripted or storyboarded rock video.

7. Have students write lyrics parodying a well-known rock song. Students could perhaps also storyboard a parody of a rock video.

8. Have students create a "sound collage". (See activity 1 on p. 112 for further information on this kind of exercise.)

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

The following questions and activities can be used to extend a unit of study on popular music and rock video:

1. In what ways is the experience of a live rock concert different from watching rock videos?

2. What are the differences between Canadian rock music or rock stars and their American counterparts? To what extent has American music taken over the Western world? What are likely to be the effects of this on Canadian music and Canadian culture in general? Some people say that Canadians think they are just like Americans or that they are pale imitations of Americans. Discuss.

3. What attempts have been made to censor rock videos? Are there rock videos that you think should not be shown to people your age or to those younger than you are? Do stations do their own censoring? How can you find out? Does the threat of censorship curtail the production of potentially offensive material? What are the implications of this? Is classification an acceptable alternative to censorship?

4. Would people go to the movies to watch rock videos if they were not on television? Why or why not?

5. If you had to give up either your personal portable stereo and headphones or rock videos, which would you choose to give up?

6. What can we expect to be the effect(s) on popular music of the increasing popularity of music videos? Why?

7. What future developments do you think are likely in this area?

8. Find examples of television programs and commercials that have adopted rock-video techniques. What are their distinctive features? How have rock videos changed television? What features do rock videos share with other commercials?

9. Trace the use of pop melodies, songs, and personalities in ads.

10. Rock concerts are a fascinating phenomenon for young people, well worth analysing in the classroom. Discuss the following question: Is a rock concert a pilgrimage, a ritualistic celebration, a commercial event dependent on considerable advance hype, or a rock video that you walk around in?

11. What differences in an individual's relationship with the environment are produced (or revealed) by the use of a personal stereo with headsets and a "ghetto blaster"?

12. Respond to the following observations about rock video:
    a) "It means the death of rock and roll." (*Rolling Stone*)
    b) "With music-video television offering twenty-four-hour service, young people will soon reach a saturation point. Rock video will be dead within two years." (anonymous)
    c) "Rock and roll is basically about sex, rage and aggression: the beat screams it, the lyrics shout it and the volume leaves no doubt." (*Cinema Canada,* October 1984) [Hence those who complain about images of aggressive sexuality are worried because now they have to see it, whereas before they had only to listen.]
    d) "Most rock videos are electronic hamburgers with satanism, chains, people in leather, dream-like or nightmare imagery, and sexy girls some of the ingredients thrown in. Can all rock videos be understood? How much of it is just an arbitrary collection of stuff from our cultural image bank with no artistic purpose?" (anonymous)
    e) Video artist John Sanborn has predicted that people will tire of rock video that stresses narrative. The future will lie in outstanding video artists moving towards abstraction through computer graphics and electronic image modifications. You will want to see such rock videos numerous times and replay the images in your mind in a kind of aesthetically satisfying way that he describes as "visual humming". To what extent do you agree with Sanborn? Are there current examples of trends that confirm his observation?

Photography

PROPERTY OF
THE ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR
STUDIES IN EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

Photography is simply a means of producing images by the action of light on a substance that is sensitive to that light. This, however, does not begin to describe either the photographic experience or the impact of photography. A photograph, however strong its resemblance to actual places, events, or objects, does not accurately mirror the world. As photographer Gary Winogrand claims, "I photograph to find out what something will look like photographed."

Photographs bombard us hourly, from magazines and family albums to the daily news. Much of what we know about ourselves, our community, and our planet is determined by the eye of the camera. Photography has become so pervasive that today it is one of the most popular media in the world. It serves us as a folk art, as a means of communication about the world around us, and as a tool for science.

The majority of photographs, however, are not taken with a great deal of deliberation. What is commonly called "snapshooting" – recording certain ritual events (e.g., the baby's first birthday, vacations, family weddings) – has been the most important commercial aspect of photography for a very long time. Thus, snapshooters, who individually buy only a few rolls of film each year, because of their great numbers, account for the vast majority of photographic revenue. The purchase of equipment makes up 29 per cent of the market, film accounts for 23 per cent, and film processing makes up 48 per cent. Companies that wish to stay in the business must keep cameras simple to operate and inexpensive and must devise advertising campaigns that encourage more "snapshooting" to keep revenue up. There is little advantage, as far as large companies are concerned, in developing photography into a specialized art.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC MEDIUM

> The camera may record exactly, but it can set down only what its operator sees, and he may see what he wants to see – what he loves and hates and pities and is proud of.
>
> John Steinbeck, *Media and Kids: Real World Learning* (Rochell Park, N.J.: Hayden, 1977), p. 81

The quotation above provides an excellent starting point for understanding the special characteristics of photography. Every photographer knows that photographs deal with the actual – that they are a document of something, no matter how unrecognizable the end result. As Susan Sontag states, "The painter constructs, the photographer discloses." This key difference between the process of painting and photography has led to an unjustified assumption that the camera does not lie, that there is no difference between a photograph and reality. Any clear understanding of the differences between a photograph and everyday reality must begin with a consideration of the unique characteristics of the photograph. The following generalizations are derived from George M. Craven, *Object and Image: An Introduction to Photography* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975), page 9:

- Photographs are two-dimensional.
- They contain a single point of view.
- They require a quantity of light.
- They are produced mechanically and instantly.
- They possess a wealth of detail.
- They can be duplicated.

When we respond to photographs aesthetically, we disregard their physical characteristics and focus on how the camera operator sees his or her subject. The following questions related to different aspects of photography are provided to help students evaluate photographic images.

- **Subject** What is the photograph about? Does the photographer wish us to think about an object, a place, a person, an event, or an idea? Is the subject unusual or revealing? Does the subject have an impact on the viewer? Is the subject representational or universal?

- **Frame** In what way has the photographer isolated his or her subject from its surroundings? Are there particular objects that become more interesting to us as a result of the frame established by the photographer? What new meaning between objects or people is created within the frame? What comparisons, contrasts, or tensions are created by the framing? What effects has the point of view had on the meaning of the subject?

- **Light** Students should examine the photographic use of light in terms of its quality (sunlight or artificial light), quantity (under- or overexposure), and angle (e.g., how the subject is lit, whether a flare was used). Guide their discussion with questions such as the following: How has the photographer used light creatively in the overall effect of the photograph? Is the subject lit from a specific angle? Is the entire photograph shot in "available light"? Do lines of light and shadow create or enhance the meaning? What reasons do you think the photographer had for using light the way he or she did?

- **Depth of field** How much detail is in focus in the picture? Did the photographer isolate certain elements and leave the rest fuzzy? Has the photographer used "sharp" or "soft" focusing to create a specific mood? Did the photographer make the right choice in the details he or she emphasized in the photograph? Is the picture too "busy" with sharply focused details?

- **Context** What is the context or ultimate use of the photograph? Students should consider the following ways in which photographs can be altered before they are presented as a finished product:
  a) *cropping* Elements in the original frame are removed.
  b) *cutting* Figures can be cut out and used in a different context.
  c) *combining* As in collages, photographs can be combined to create a new meaning.
  d) *designing* Photographs can be used as part of an album cover, magazine article, or advertisement.
  e) *sequencing* The impact of a photograph can change when it is included in a sequence of several photographs.
  f) *captioning* Supplementary words can change the original intention of a photograph. They can appear below, above, or in the original picture.

Teachers wishing to develop a unit on photography will find it an easy and inexpensive medium with which to work. There is scarcely a household anywhere that does not have some kind of camera or a large box of unsorted photographs. One of the advantages in working with photography is that the hands-on activities are simple to organize and require very little in the way of technical knowledge. The activities in this section reflect the need to involve students creatively with media, without requiring complicated and expensive pieces of equipment.

The activities are divided into three categories: "Responding to Images", "Using Photographs", and "Making Photographs". Teachers will find several detailed activities that require students to work in all three areas.

RESPONDING TO IMAGES

1. Susan Sontag's introductory essay in *On Photography* (New York: Dell, 1977) defines the importance of photographic ritual in family life: "For at least a century, the wedding photograph has been as much a part of the ceremony as the prescribed verbal formulas." This activity requires students to examine the social significance of photography in the family and to find common characteristics in the construction of reality in the medium.

   Arrange for students to bring in examples of family vacation pictures. Have them examine the photographs to note the effective use of photographic techniques (see the list on pp. 137-38). Choose good and inferior examples of photographs from the selection, listing the clichés and predictable shots that can be found in most travel shots (e.g., someone standing in front of a statue). Ask students whether Sontag's description of the importance of wedding pictures holds true for other photographic rituals. Have students find evidence in the photographs to demonstrate the connection between poses and their meaning (see activity 3 on pp. 143-44).

   This activity can be extended into other personal uses of photography (e.g., baby pictures, birthdays, holiday festivities). Ask students questions such as the following: What are the psychological needs that each of these common uses of photography satisfies? What is the overall importance of the photograph in recording family life? How would you feel if your parents had failed to take pictures of you, particularly when you were small?

2. As a follow-up activity have students assemble a chronological photo album of themselves from the pictures they brought to class. Ask them whether the photographs stimulate memories about their early childhood. How do they account for this power of the photograph to spark particular memories? Why was each of the photographs taken? Have students compare photographs of each other and discuss the similarities and differences in the various collections.

3. Ask students to find examples of companies that exploit the family use of photography to sell their products. Have them compare the results of the ad image with those in the family album, considering questions such as the following: What are the significant differences in the quality of the ad image and the family photo? Are these ads an effective method of selling film and film processing?

4. By focusing on a photographic image, students can learn to focus on their choice of words as well. The following activity can be used to demonstrate the connection between images and words. Show students a slide or photograph of a leaf on a branch and encourage them to move beyond simply identifying the subject matter of a photograph to responding to it in ways such as the following:

   - leaf (*naming or identification stage*)
   - autumn (*associational or contextual stage*)
   - loneliness (*emotional stage*)
   - "hanging on" (*attributional stage*)
   - "full sail" (*fictional or fantasy stage*)
   - "tree outside my window" (*personalized stage*)
   - reference to a poem or story (*correlative stage*)
   - "speaks of our insignificance" (*value-judgement stage*)

   This activity can be used as a source of inspiration for student writing activities.

5. Arrange a field trip to a photographic gallery. Students should answer questions such as the following: What is the environment like? What colour are the walls? What seating space is provided? How are the photographs exhibited? Are they at eye level? Can you step back from the prints? Is there a theme or obvious sequence in their display? Work with students prior to the field trip to develop questions that they can use to interview the curator of the exhibit. As a follow-up the class members can develop an exhibit of their own work in the school.

USING PHOTOGRAPHS

1. The following activity will encourage students to examine the effects achieved by the juxtaposition and sequencing of photographs. The skills developed in this activity can be extended to several other media (e.g., film, television, advertising).

   Distribute a variety of magazines. Have students cut out photographs and mount them on pieces of heavy cardboard or Bristol board to make them more durable during handling.

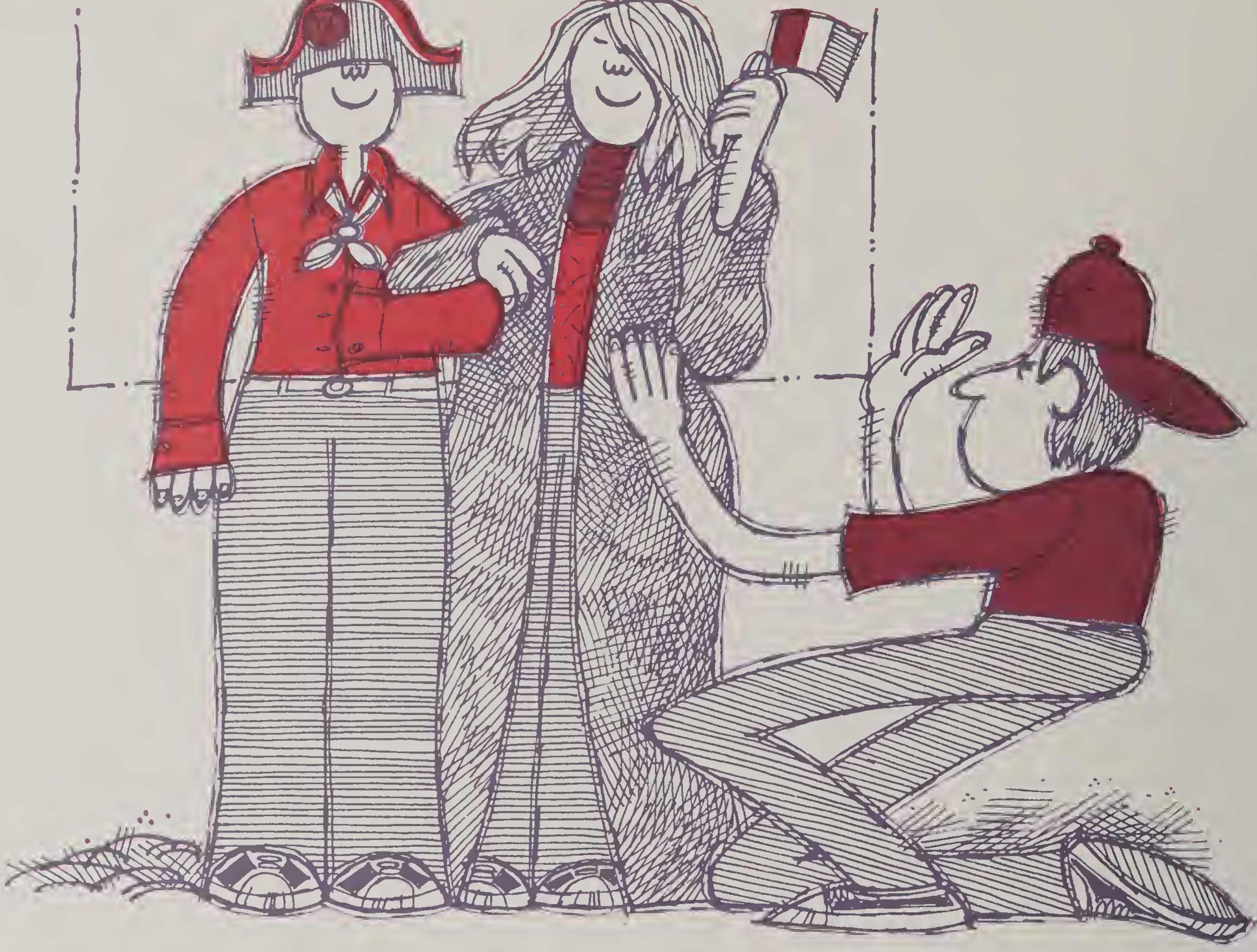
   Students now experiment, in small groups, with various juxtapositions of images, discussing how meaning is created or altered by context. For example, what happens when we see a photograph of a politician next to an image of starving children? What facial expressions would make the viewer sympathetic or unsympathetic to the politician? What are some of the possible messages created by such juxtapositioning?

   Students can arrange their own photographs in sequences and discuss the impact. If video equipment is available, they could tape the pictures and add a sound track to create a graphic montage. Extend their powers of observation by distributing magazines to the class and using them as the basis for a discussion of photographic layout.

2. Have students make a story entirely out of photographs. This activity can be done with prints mounted on cards or slides assembled on the slide sorter (let students control the pace of the projector). Ask students whether the elimination of some of the images changes the story.

3. Students can use photographs or slides (as in activity 2) to investigate ideas or emotions or to establish relationships (e.g., Happiness is . . .; soft vs. hard; good vs. bad; objects close up compared to those far away). If slides are used, a simple sound track might be included to enhance the message.

4. Photographers, designers, or editors will frequently change a photograph after it has been shot by cropping it at the printing stage. Although cropping is a standard practice in the newspaper and magazine industry when a decision on layout has to be made, it can radically alter the intended meaning of a photograph. Students can learn about the inevitable bias that results from cropping a photograph by using two L-shaped frames and experimenting with photographs from magazines or newspapers. Divide the class into several groups and have students find examples of photographs that look better to them when cropped "tighter".



5. Students can come to appreciate the power of the photographic image by role playing important moments in history. To begin, collect several examples of photographs that were taken at a dramatic moment. Discuss with students how the importance or effectiveness of each photograph depends on the moment when it was taken. Then have students create a one-minute dramatic tableau of an important historic event, real or imagined. As a group, they should decide which "moments" within their scene would make good photographs. To accomplish this, they present their tableau, "freezing" at the precise moments that effective photographs could be taken.

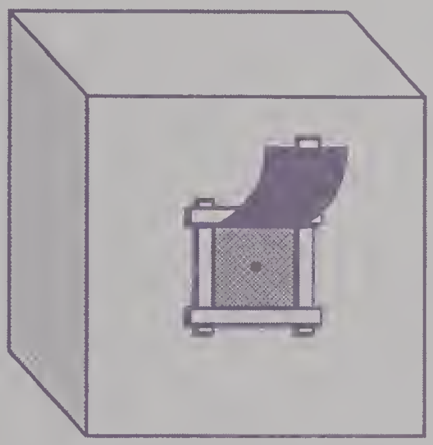
6. Considering that more people look at photographs than at anything else in newspapers and magazines, it is obviously important for students to learn about the kinds of editorial decisions that go into selecting photographs. The rule of thumb in the business of selection can be stated quite simply. Select pictures with dramatic action or violence.

   Have students compare the selections of news photographs in several dailies over a short period of time. Introduce them to tabloids as an unusual example of newspapers. Ask them what values regarding the news are implied by the frequency of certain types of picture.

MAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

The following sequence of hands-on activities will introduce students to how a camera works, as well as to some of the problems that were encountered by the pioneers of photography.

1. By using a pin-hole camera, students can learn about the difficulties that all photographers faced when cameras were first invented. They will also enjoy the thrill of seeing pictures that have come from a camera they have made themselves. A simple pin-hole camera is illustrated in the accompanying diagram. Black Bristol board should be used to make the camera "light-tight".

   The photographs produced by pin-hole cameras have a special, somewhat eerie quality about them. Encourage students to select shots that can be enhanced by the quality of the images (e.g., trees blowing in the wind). Getting good results from a pin-hole camera requires concentration and patience, but the benefits of this activity are considerable.

2. Before colour printing was developed, photographers created their own artistic colouring technique, using a variety of materials. Show students some examples and then have them work with any water-based oil paints to "hand-tint" black-and-white photographs to achieve the same special effect. If students have produced their own black-and-white photographs from a pin-hole camera, have them select four or five of their favourites for this activity. They can also use black-and-white prints from their family album (with permission) for this activity.

3. Students can learn to respond to photographs by distinguishing between the *figure* (subject) and *ground* (surrounding environment) in the photographic composition. In making appropriate responses to any media text, it is important to understand what the hidden "grounds" are. The use of photographs for such an exploration is useful because photographic images are easy to compile and are fixed and inexpensive.

a) Have students cut out the human models that appear in various magazine advertisements and assemble them on separate sheets of cardboard. They should keep the backgrounds of the advertisements for later discussion. Working in small groups, students then exchange their cardboard models and try to figure out what lifestyle advertisement and product are associated with the manner of dress and the pose of the individual models. Alternatively, students might reconstruct new and humorous images by cutting and pasting models onto different backgrounds. Encourage students to be highly experimental in creating collages of postures and expressions.

b) Have students take ten portraits of each other in ten different settings (e.g., in front of a police station or a brick wall, in their home or their bedroom, on a street corner). A discussion of the results should focus on how the ground influences the student's posture and the composition, tone, and angle of each image. Students should recognize that a certain body language results from specific contexts. Ask them to try to identify the specific behaviours created by different environments (e.g., in the classroom, at home with their parents, in a restaurant with their friends). Discuss with students how the interpretation of figure in a photograph depends on ground. For example, what effect does positioning a figure out of context have on a photograph? Have students collect successful examples of such effects in advertisements in magazines.

4. Students can learn how composition creates meaning through a simple activity that develops their power of selection and encourages them to interpret reality creatively. Ask students (working either in small groups or individually) to photograph the same scene in three different ways, trying to make each photo distinct from the others. They should refer to the list of aspects of photography on pages 137-38 and emphasize one or two of them in each shot.

5. Have students design an advertisement for a product of their own choice and then create two photographic advertisements for the product. In the first the product should be the main object, dominating all other elements in the photo. In the second the product should be excluded altogether or made very small compared to the other elements. Ask students what different impressions are evoked by the two advertisements and which one they feel to be more effective.

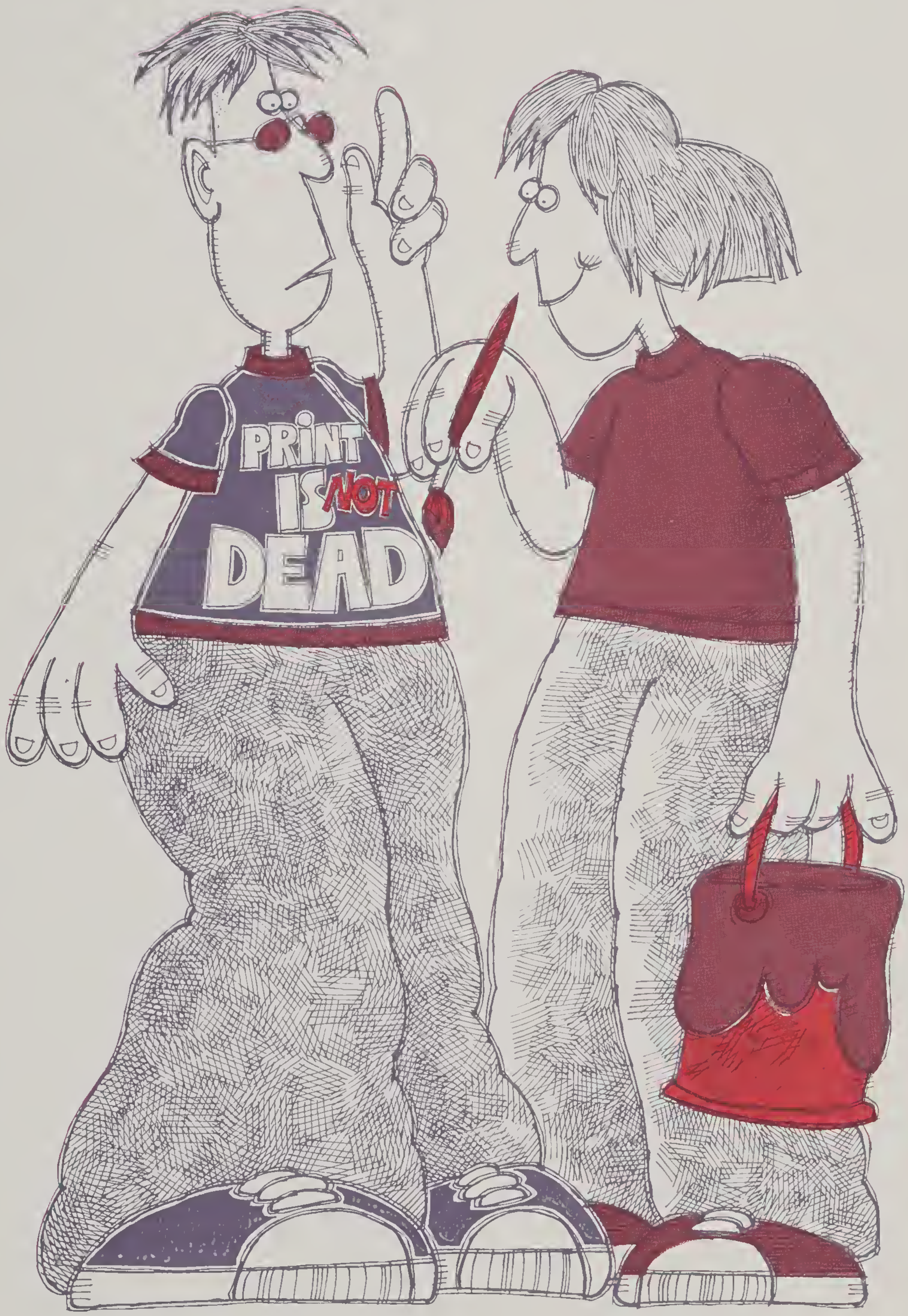
6. Have students create a three-dimensional photograph by cutting apart photographs and remounting sections of them onto a three-dimensional surface like a cube or pyramid. For example, they might create a photographic sculpture on the theme of nuclear war, which can be mounted on a model of a nuclear warhead or a globe of the world. Students can use a variety of magazines as source material for this activity.

7. Students can find out, by photographing the same individual in different ways, how much influence a photo-journalist has in shaping our impressions of important people. They can then select five of their photographs, ranging from the sardonic to the flattering, and write captions for each as they might appear in a newspaper.

Print

We are taking part in a cultural revolution . . . which is essentially a shift from the power of the printed word, which we have always accepted and revered, to the power of electronic media.

Gilbert Seldes, media analyst



OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

As young people become immersed in the new and powerful electronic media, many teachers and parents fear that traditional literacy, the very basis of Western civilization, will be destroyed. Even to include the respected subject of print and literacy in a general resource book on media might seem as controversial today as it was in 1964 when Marshall McLuhan warned that "highly literate people in our time find it difficult to examine this question without getting into a moral panic."

However, if we note the proliferation of print in all its forms, it should be clear that print is not only the oldest form of media but also the most versatile and the most durable. In fact, one of the fascinating areas for media students to examine is the degree to which newspapers, magazines, and the popular book trade have adjusted to the inroads made by the other media. Clearly, any predictions about the death of print are premature and the various forms of print still exert a strong influence on all Canadians, including students. Newspapers, for example, still remain the largest advertising medium in Canada, with 25.1 per cent of the market share (over $1.5 billion) compared to 17.1 per cent for television. Other print media account for 37.0 per cent of total advertising dollars, well above television's share.

Undeniably, much of the popular print that students read is not on the level of the great literary classics. At the same time excellent newspapers, magazines, and mass-market paperbacks do exist. Popular paperbacks have been used in classrooms for a long time, and many teachers are also aware of the large number of provocative and well-written articles, reports, and essays provided by some of Canada's outstanding newspapers and magazines. It is important to realize, however, that students may not have the required skills to deal with much of the popular reading that they do. Many students also rely heavily on print and, in fact, trust the authority of print without using the same critical skills that they might apply when, for example, they view a popular film or a television program.

Students need to develop an awareness that the media work by means of skilfully arranged constructions (see the "Key Concepts" section in the Introduction to this document). Thus, it is important that educators adopt a larger definition of "print" to include more than just a study of the content, vocabulary, and syntax of a text. Students require a knowledge of the variety of contexts involved in the print medium and must become alert to the various visual codings that are an integral part of the content of any print item. These include, in the case of newspapers, for example, such key visual elements as the design and arrangement of headlines and captions and the placement of items in juxtaposition with other items, including photographs and advertisements.

Many of the techniques are sophisticated – more so, in fact, than some members of the industry will admit, preferring instead to insist that the techniques of this medium gain their authenticity because they are natural and artless. In a sense, the student's task today is to learn to "read" in a new way.

Fundamentally, this expanded view of reading is a central component of critical-thinking strategies in any school. The activities related to print require the student to collect data, to pose critical questions, and to synthesize and evaluate new conclusions on the basis of accumulated information. Ultimately, students who are able to develop critical-thinking skills as a result of their study of popular print forms will gain much more than the latest update on "news, information, and weather".

The following sources have been helpful in the preparation of the activities in this section. Teachers will find other information and additional activities in them.

Cramer, Ward. *Reading Beyond the Headline*. Portland, Maine: J. Weston Walch, 1973.

MacLean, Eleanor. *Between the Lines: How to Detect Bias and Propaganda in the News and Everyday Life*. Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1981.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

McLuhan, Marshall; Hutchon, Kathryn; and McLuhan, Eric. *City as Classroom: Understanding Language and Media*. Toronto: Book Society, 1977.

Masterman, Len. *Teaching the Media*. London: Comedia, 1985.

Rissover, Fredric, and Birch, David. *Mass Media and the Popular Arts*. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

Stewart, Walter. *Canadian Newspapers: The Inside Story*. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1980.

Wood, Pamela. *You and Aunt Arie: A Guide to Cultural Journalism*. Nederland, Col.: Great America Printing Co., 1975.

Zwicker, Barrie, and MacDonald, Dick. *The News: Inside the Canadian Media*. Ottawa: Deneau, 1982.

1. Print surrounds students every day everywhere, from billboards to T-shirts and from chalkboard notes to their own locker-door ads; it is important that they realize the centrality of print in human history as well. Encourage students to do some simple research in encyclopedias on the origins of print. They might look up and report on some of the ancient beginnings of this form of media. Have students bring in some of the fascinating facts about early print (e.g., Sumerian cuneiform – 3500 BC; Egyptian hieroglyphics – 3100 BC; the beginnings of the alphabet – Phoenicia, c. 2000 BC; the contributions of Ancient Greece and Rome to the Western alphabet).

   After they have completed this research, students should be encouraged to go on to discover some facts about the history of print. Some of the following areas will reward a little research in encyclopedias and other sources: developments in China in the second century; movable type (eleventh-century China); the first Western newspaper (Rome, *Acta Diurna* [*Action Journal*], 59 BC); Johannes Gutenberg and Company (Germany, 1450); developments in the New World (the United States and Canada).

   Encourage students to find interesting "off-beat" facts about this important topic. They could also bring in visual designs of early print forms and demonstrate these on an overhead projector for other class members.

2. Students could conduct a general survey to investigate their own experiences with and reactions to the wide variety of print forms. Such a survey will be an invaluable data bank for everyone in the class. The components of the survey should be decided by students in group discussions and then organized clearly on a data sheet for distribution to family members, peers inside and outside the class, and other readers in their neighbourhoods. The following are some of the key components that should be included:

   - age, sex, and level of education of the readers
   - type of reading material (the most popular fiction and non-fiction categories)
   - amount of time spent reading, relative to the time spent on other media and other pastimes
   - personal reading habits or quirks (e.g., preferred departments of the newspaper)
   - motives for reading
   - last newspaper, magazine, or book read
   - most memorable item read in the last day or week
   - reading contexts or occasions
   - effect of advertisements on the print read
   - effect of design on various forms of print

Students then analyse the results of their print survey. What did they find out about print? For example, is it true, as professional research indicates, that young people do not read the newspaper as much as adults? What items *do* various age levels prefer? What items do they pass over? Is it true, as some media analysts say, that the first items that people turn to in the newspaper are the ones that they already know (e.g., the outcome of sports events)? What exactly do people like about the print material that they buy? What do they dislike? How many students actually subscribe to magazines that reflect their own interests? How many go to the public library regularly? Who are their personal "paperback heroes" (and authors)?

It is important that students draw conclusions about the nature and effects of this medium. They could be asked to consider, for example, on the basis of their findings, what advice related to content and design they would have for publishers planning a new newspaper or magazine.

3. Students may have had direct experiences with print that mean more to them than impersonal words printed on paper. For example, when people find themselves suddenly "immortalized" in the press, the effect is frequently startling and always educational. Students often keep clippings of press reports that have involved them personally. These may be reports of serious events or of happy occasions, such as a sports event or an event related to school.

   Ask students if any of them have ever been mentioned in the press in any way. Usually students are eager to volunteer information about the event, the reporter's questions, and the report itself as it subsequently appeared. What surprised them about the "picture" of the event as it eventually materialized in print? What advice would they give to anyone who was going to be interviewed by the press? At this point, you might find it useful to lead a general discussion on some of the devices and effects of the print medium. (See also "Reporting the News" in "Cross-Media Studies".)

4. Students need to realize that print works on us in different ways, only one of which is through content or information. Some analysts have pointed out that newspapers and magazines are not the static forms that we might think: in fact, they change formats frequently in an effort to adjust to the way in which their customers "process" their reading material. For instance, in Canada *Maclean's* and *Saturday Night* magazine have been reformatted several times in their history in an effort to keep up to shifting reader interests and the growing influence of other media. *Maclean's,* for example, was published in 1905 in an effort to fashion a general-interest magazine. Its first names, *The Business Magazine* and *The Busy Man's Magazine,* say something about the way in which the editor, Lieutenant-Colonel John Bayne Maclean, saw the new readership. Until 1975 *Maclean's* contained Canadian content feature articles and fiction much like *Look* and the *Saturday Evening Post* in the United States. In 1975 it changed its format to a news

magazine design, much like one of its competitors, *Time*. The size became more compact, as did the length of the news reports; the news magazine "journalese" followed, though it was not as blatant as the "zippy" style of *Time*. The aim of the magazine was similar, however: a magazine that contained non-fiction items, usually in brief, self-contained units, complete and compact – again for the "busy" reader and for the reader used to the "jolts" provided by television and the other electronic media.

Although *Saturday Night* has not taken on the news-magazine format in the same way, it *does* specialize in longer, more in-depth news features, made stylish by "artsy" photography and chic artwork and typefaces. *Saturday Night,* originally a weekly Toronto newspaper, "hitting the stands" on Saturday night, made money by featuring the ideas of the conservative Toronto establishment. Today it has become as compact, as modern, and as "fast" as most of the other magazines have had to be in order to attract and hold its particular readership.

It is important for students to realize that modern print forms are ingenious in the way that "the right words in the right order" are blended with other design factors such as graphics, photography, typeface, and juxtaposition. You might underscore this point, using questions such as the following:

- To what extent does the design of many news magazines and newspapers, with their compartmental "windows on the world" layout, make reading easier for the reader? How does such design affect the "seriousness" of the information?
- How does the context of reading the print medium influence the process of reading? How does it influence the way magazines are designed? For example, advertisers are aware that readers "flip" through a magazine in a way that is different from "reading" a newspaper. When we flip through a magazine in a doctor's office, what makes us stop and notice an ad or an article? Is it true that many people in this situation read a magazine from back to front?

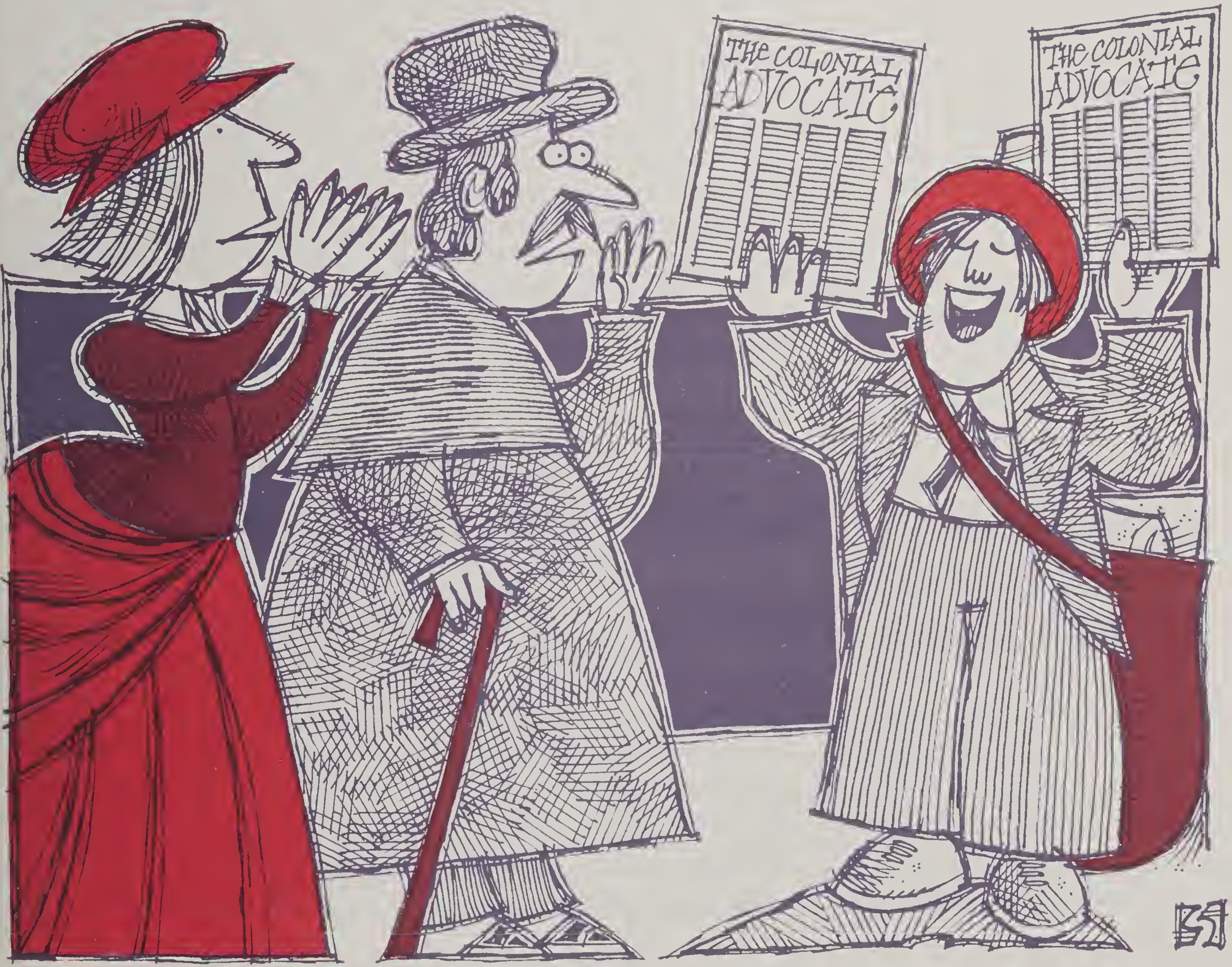
5. Have students list three forms of the print medium. For each form, ask students to suggest a typical reading context or situation where reading occurs (e.g., you are reading your own – or someone else's – newspaper on the bus). If you were a publisher, how might you structure your product to meet the different "reading contexts" of your customer? (One Toronto newspaper, for example, has printed instructions on how to read its newspaper on the subway using "The Subway Fold".)

6. Ask students to consider the use of "jump lines", brief instructions to the reader at the bottom of the first page of a story on where to find the continuation of the report elsewhere in the newspaper. Some readers, in letters-to-the-editor columns, have complained that "jump lines" are a nuisance. If a newspaper opts to arrange the news in compact "boxes" without the use of "jump lines", what effect will it have on the news itself? Ask students to think of other format decisions that have literally reshaped the various print forms. What might be the strategy behind these format decisions? What effect do they have on the way all of us read print today?

NEWSPAPERS

HISTORY

The first daily newspaper in Canada, the Montreal *Daily Advertiser*, began publishing in 1833. Most Canadian newspapers at this time were intended for an elite minority who could read and who were interested primarily in one topic – politics. By 1857 there were 213 newspapers in Canada, the main function of which was to display the political views of their editors. Newspaper editors like Joseph Howe and William Lyon Mackenzie were typical of the period, in which newspapers were more devoted to partisan politics than to the straightforward reporting of news or information. The success of a newspaper like Mackenzie's *The Colonial Advocate*, with its libellous editorials and its thirteen-point headlines, proved that the newspaper could now not only reflect public opinion, but also change it – if it could continue to win readers, that is.



In the latter part of the nineteenth century, newspapers in the United States were transformed into the mass-circulation journals to which the twentieth-century reader is accustomed. Owners such as William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer made the newspapers the champion of the "common man". This approach helped newspapers reach new levels of circulation (peaking in Canada in 1951) and also accounted for the less admirable aspects of the newspaper craft – sensationalism, distortion, and "yellow journalism". In Canada the colourful newspaper magnates have tended to give way to the corporations and the newspaper chains. Like other media, newspapers and magazines have had to think of advertising dollars and daily reader support. The single-minded politics and control of firebrand editors like William Lyon Mackenzie in Canada and commercially minded publishers like William Randolph Hearst in the United States are now part of history.

It is intriguing to study the similarities in history, form, and content among newspapers, magazines, and mass-market paperback novels, all of which continue to compete for space on newsstands throughout the world. In the paperback field the growth of dime novels and penny dreadfuls corresponded to the growth of the Hearst chain newspapers. In fact, these early paperbacks were designed to resemble little newspapers and were sold both on the newsstands and through subscription. During the Second World War pulp paperbacks grew in popularity and were increasingly outfitted as "miniature magazines" to compete on the newsstands with the famous magazines of the day.

In the 1960s the rise of the "new journalism" marked an important change in the content and style of newspapers and magazines. Practitioners of the new journalism urged the use of colourful techniques borrowed from fiction and claimed that pure objectivity in reporting was neither possible nor desirable. The impact of the new journalism is pertinent to students, who may not readily detect the traits of this journalistic style. (See pp. 216-17.)

SOME USEFUL FACTS ABOUT NEWSPAPERS

Circulation and readership are extremely important factors with regard to newspapers. *Circulation* is defined as the number of people who purchase a newspaper each day, whereas *readership* refers to the number who actually read it each day. Advertisers are most concerned with *reach* – the number of times that the target audience is exposed to the "message" (the advertisement).

Newspaper circulation seems to have stabilized over the past decade, with a compound annual growth rate of 2.7 per cent. It is worth noting, however, that while 63 per cent of Canadians will read today's newspaper, only 55 per cent of those aged eighteen to twenty-four will do so compared to 70 per cent of those between the ages of fifty and sixty-four. The average Canadian newspaper reader spends fifty-three minutes a day ("flat time") with the newspaper; on the weekend circulation climbs, along with the time spent with the newspaper (sixty-one minutes). Significantly, "flat time" for magazines has improved, because, as surveys show, magazine readers tend to return to the same issue of a magazine more than once.

In Canada most daily newspapers are owned and run by a few large corporations, which have holdings in magazines, mass-market paperbacks, and film. Southam Inc., for example, with fifteen newspapers (in the mid-1980s), controls 27.3 per cent of total newspaper circulation in Canada and also owns Coles bookstores, numerous trade magazines, and half of *TV Guide*. Torstar (19.6 per cent of Canada's total newspaper circulation), a large, diversified media complex, has holdings in paperbacks, films, educational materials, and computers. In 1976 Torstar bought a controlling interest in Harlequin Enterprises, which sells Harlequin Romances.

It is also important that students know something about the debate over the future of newspapers. This issue relates to the future of other print forms as well because it involves the central issues of government involvement in free enterprise and the nature of free speech – issues that are not likely to disappear. Essentially, the problem is that while newspapers have steadily declined in number, their readership has climbed. It is also becoming clear that the Canadian reader is being served less and less by smaller independent newspapers and increasingly by corporate chains. For example, the Southam and Thomson corporations now control most of the newspapers in Canada and, as businesses with shareholders, both chains continue to buy newspapers in Canada and the United States. According to some media analysts, the result is lack of competition and lack of tough, independent journalism. Walter Stewart made the following observation on this issue in *Canadian Newspapers: The Inside Story* "I have this recurring nightmare in which Canada only has one newspaper, owned by Kenneth Thomson, and filled with Hollywood gossip and columns by Charles Lynch."

The Royal Commission on Newspapers, chaired by Tom Kent, addressed head-on the problem of the concentration of ownership of Canada's daily press. The central issue throughout the commission's report was whether the few powerful owners of the newspaper chains influenced the pages of most of the dailies in Canada. "Freedom of the press is not a property right of owners. It is the right of the people." The commission recommended the following:

- that newspaper chains be prohibited from buying each other out or buying out the last of the independents;
- that tax credits be set up for newspapers that spend more than the national average on their news columns;
- that government incentives (i.e., money) be established to help purchasers of newspapers that might otherwise close;
- that the Thomson chain be forced to drop its ownership of the *Globe and Mail* or its other thirty-nine Canadian newspapers.

There were other recommendations as well. Most of them involved government "interference" in the "normal" lives of Canadian newspaper chains.

Newspapers themselves generally condemned the commission's recommendations. The *Winnipeg Free Press* wrote an editorial warning of "Big Brother for the newspapers". *The Sun*'s Claire Hoy wrote about "Visions of *Pravda* Canada . . . forgive me for wanting to puke." *The Globe and Mail* called the report "an idiot's delight".

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following are some of the terms that students will find useful when discussing newspapers:

advertorial A combination of advertisements and editorial, sometimes (but not always) presented as an insert, in which case it becomes thinly disguised advertising copy that looks like news reporting.

caption One or two lines of print under a photo or illustration. Although the photo credit is given to the photographer under the photo and near the caption, the caption itself is rarely written by the photographer.

deck A second, smaller headline inserted between the main headline and the story.

gatekeeper The name that media analysts have given to the editor of a newspaper. This might be the managing editor, the city editor, or the wire editor. The gatekeeper is the person who decides which news to print and which to hold back.

inverted pyramid pattern The hypothetical structure of newspaper stories. The order is inverted – from most important facts to least important, from most interesting detail to least interesting. The "lead" should contain answers to all the important questions about a story (i.e., who, what, when, where, why, and how). Because the important facts are placed at the beginning, the editor is able to cut some of the bottom portions of the story if necessary without sacrificing the whole.

jump line A line printed at the bottom of a story to direct the reader to the continuation of the story elsewhere in the newspaper. This is done to get more stories on the front page and to force the reader to read through other parts of the newspaper, which might otherwise be neglected. Some readers have complained about the inconvenience of jump lines. Some newspapers, mainly tabloids, contain their stories on one page, usually screened or in boxes.

juxtaposition The positioning of certain items (e.g., stories, photographs, advertisements) beside each other on the page. The juxtaposition of certain items may be accidental or may be done for reasons of space. As well, some items that are apparently unrelated are sometimes juxtaposed to create an association or a subtext.

media event A reported event that appears to be news but is actually staged by various groups or businesses. Often it becomes a source of free advertising.

the new journalism A term devised in the late 1960s by writer Tom Wolfe to describe a school of journalistic thought that holds that the writer's personality and bias are inevitable in any "straight" news report. All writing is "fiction" in the sense that it is a creation or a rendering of an event. Media analyst Ronald Primeau explains one argument for the new journalism as it is demonstrated in nightly television news coverage:

> The new journalism demands flair and artistry rather than dull, "objective" coverage. Biases that can never be eliminated anyway are therefore exploited for their artistry rather than suppressed by a need to appear unbiased.
>
> Ronald Primeau, *The Rhetoric of Television*
> (New York: Longman, 1979)

placement The location of stories in the newspaper by section and their location on the page.

rewrite desk The editor or several editors whose job it is to rewrite and recast the news before it finds its way into the newspaper. The rewrite desk has several key tasks. One is to rework material from other media to make it look right for the particular newspaper. Another task is to polish or to provide an "angle" for the work of a staff reporter.

rules Lines used to separate unrelated stories or to surround a story completely in boxes or screens. Rules can be used simply to separate items or they can be used to call attention to a story or to direct the eye from one story to another. The absence of any rules also creates an effect.

screens The shading-in of boxes in newspaper stories, usually in tabloids. Printers can create screens of various percentages to match the effect desired: darker or lighter. The headline or copy is then printed over the screen.

visual coding The use of photographs to suggest meaning by associative details. For example, many heads of state are interviewed and photographed in their offices, surrounded by symbols of authority.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

1. Distribute newspapers to the class. Initially, it is best if the whole class uses the same issue of the newspaper. Class sets of newspapers are inexpensive and convenient to order. In fact, some newspapers will provide tours, workshops, and class sets of newspapers as study kits. (This material is quite complete and useful, although it is not as critical as that found in some media texts and other resources.)

   Allow students time to read and enjoy the day's newspaper. You can learn a great deal about students' abilities from their individual reactions and comments as they read. Afterwards, discuss the different ways in which they responded. You may wish to point out the results of past newspaper marketing surveys: the "average" newspaper reader reads the headlines first and then a favourite item (e.g., the "advice to the lovelorn" column, the horoscope, or the sports scores that he or she already knows). If this is valid, what does it tell us about the way people read and react to the newspaper?

2. You may wish to conduct a general brainstorming session on the various responses to the newspaper or you may prefer to transfer the data generated by the following questions onto worksheet forms:

   - What sections did students turn to first?
   - What sections did they by-pass? Why?
   - What factors governed their response – the articles, the photographs, or the advertisements?
   - How important were factors of layout, such as the following: headlines, typefaces, boxes and borders, the planned juxtaposition of print items with photographs and with other blocks of print?

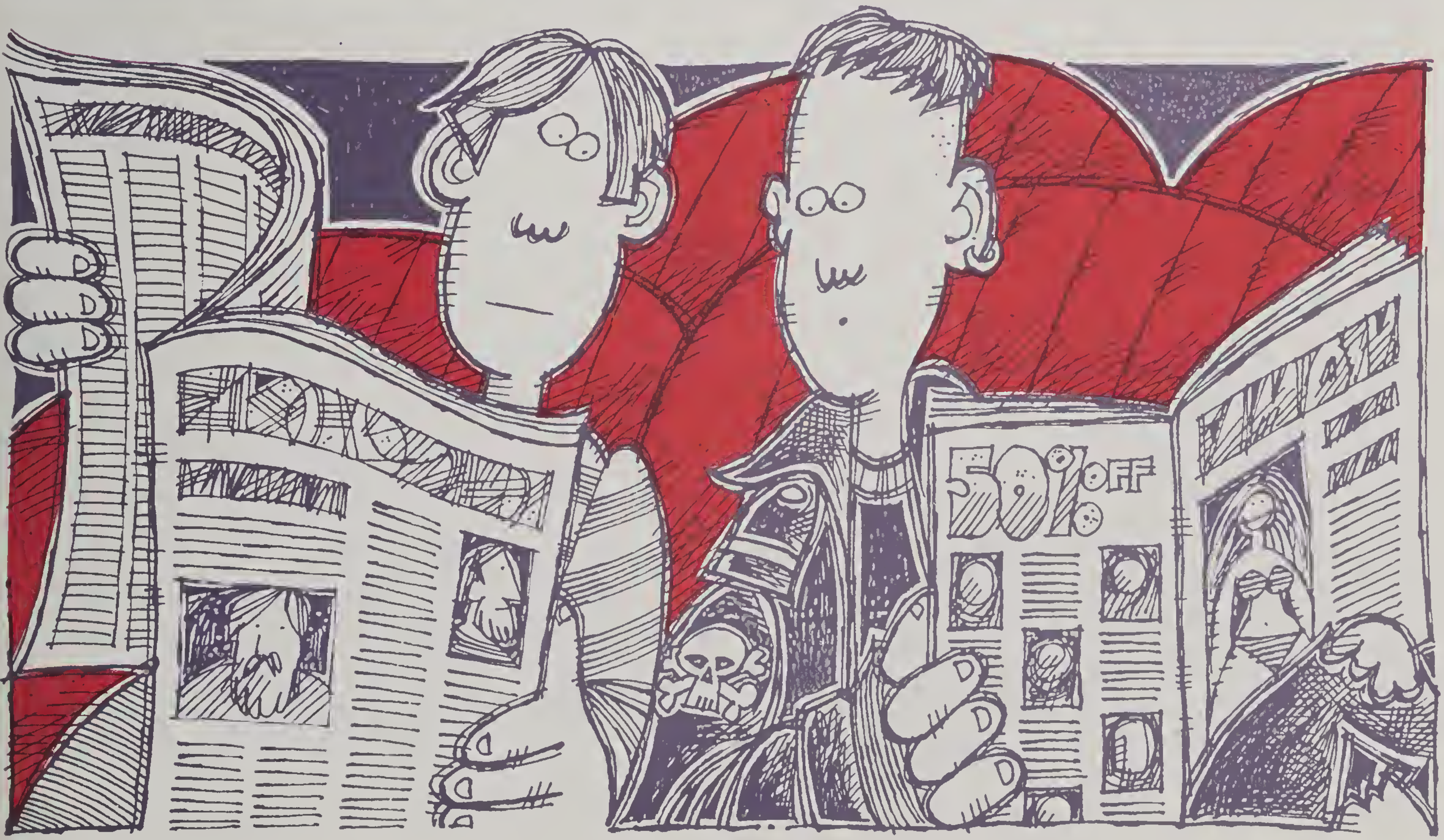
   Students can also rank items in the newspaper as follows:

   - the most important news
   - the most interesting news
   - the items that most people would read first
   - the items that would appeal to older readers
   - the items that would appeal to younger readers

3. Ask students to state, from their responses to one issue of the newspaper, the factors that determine the various kinds of "news". Have students locate sections and stories that appeal to different readers. In general, would they agree that the newspaper has more appeal to older readers? What suggestions would they make to the newspaper industry to help it retain or increase its sales to younger readers?

4. The newspaper is a print form with its own distinctive characteristics. Ask students to determine some of the important differences between newspapers and other forms of the mass media. For example, how is reading a newspaper different from reading a magazine or listening to the radio? Have students consider some newspaper design factors, such as the following:
   - Does the visual "mosaic" of the newspaper page cause us to skim over the important news in favour of "soft" news?
   - What bias can emerge in the newspaper as a result of its unique form?
   - Is the news essentially communal in nature – the "inside story" on everyone's particular community? If so, what is the relative importance of international news?

5. Organize a field trip to a local newspaper so that students can see how it operates. Many newspapers offer plant tours and discussion periods. For example, the three major Toronto dailies all offer this service to schools. Additional information on newspapers is available from TVOntario's Perspectives series and from the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association, which operates a mailing list.



NEWSPAPER CONTENT

> Get the news. Get it first. Spare no expense. Denounce crooked wealth and promise better conditions for the poor to keep readers. INCREASE CIRCULATION.
>
> William Randolph Hearst, memo to his staff

The activities in this section are designed to help students see that the content of the news is more than simply the citing of facts. Editorial selection and arrangement are also important factors.

1. News agencies provide news from most countries around the world, yet only a fraction of the news that comes into newspaper offices each day actually finds its way onto the pages of the papers. What explanation can students give for this? Ask students to locate two items on the front page and to speculate on the reasons why the gatekeeper chose them.

2. Discuss with students the way newspaper copy gives the reader the story in the inverted-pyramid structure (in order of descending importance). Why does a newspaper usually structure its facts in this artificial way? What does it tell us about the factor of speed in newspaper work? About the factors of space and layout? (Reporters may not always know how long their stories will be or how, exactly, their stories will appear on the page. Sometimes, the editors have to cut the story at the last minute, and most editors will begin cutting from the bottom.)

3. Make an outline of one or two newspaper articles to illustrate how they follow the inverted-pyramid structure. Then give students a list of facts from an actual news story and have them draft stories that follow the inverted-pyramid structure. Students can later compare their stories with the original newspaper story.

4. Have students locate a warm human-interest story and write a short story based on it. In this exercise students must reinvert the pyramid and create outcomes, motives, and so on.

5. Many students assume that newspaper copy is straight factual reporting. Often they have difficulty distinguishing between statements of fact and statements of opinion. Separate different types of newspaper copy for students; these might include a front-page story, a column of opinion, a humorous piece, and an item from the sports pages. Have students underline statements of opinion in one colour and statements of pure fact in another colour. Draw their attention to the proportion of one colour to the other. Use questions such as the following: How much opinion can be found in "pure" reporting? What specific words are used to change fact into opinion? Discuss with students the issue of "freedom of the press" as it applies in Canadian law and as it governs the Canadian press. What constitutes libel? What exactly is the "public's right to know"? How far should this extend?

6. Newspapers are often accused of slanting the news by exaggerating or sensationalizing it. Ask students what sensationalism in the news really means and about some of the ways in which news can be distorted. Examine one section of the newspaper for a demonstration of sensationalism as students have defined it and discuss how this item qualifies as sensationalism. You may wish to suggest some areas for further investigation, such as the newspaper's use of (a) headlines, (b) photographs and captions, (c) "loaded" words and syntax that result in slanted copy, and (d) faulty logic (e.g., hasty generalizations, begging the question, false analogies).

   Ask students what constitutes good, balanced news reporting in the press and have them locate examples of such reporting in the same issue of the newspaper used above. Have them study different types of newspapers. Some of the respected Canadian and foreign newspapers can be obtained from public libraries and from news agents, or by contacting the newspapers directly. In addition to the major Ontario dailies, newspapers like the *Vancouver Sun,* the *Washington Post,* and the *New York Times* will give students an important perspective on ideas and events that will differ from that of the local paper. Students should also gain some experience with less admirable examples of the form. Have students consider the following: Judging from the best and the worst, what constitutes a "good" newspaper? What problems does a reputable newspaper with high standards face today in a competitive media environment?

7. Have students examine the front page of a newspaper and classify the stories according to three categories: "good news", "bad news", and "neutral news". Collect the results. They should consider why there is a preponderance of bad news. Have them repeat the activity to locate examples of "soft" and "hard" news and note the ratio of one to the other.

8. In newspapers, as in other fields, computers are revolutionizing journalism. Reporters are increasingly using data bases to dig for facts, and the word processor has changed the speed at which copy is written, edited, and printed. Discuss with students the effects of the new technology. Where can they see evidence of increased speed in gathering, writing, and printing the news? For example, how have sentence structure and even punctuation been changed by the use of new technology? What effect has it had on the use of "journalese" or "buzz-words"?

9. Have students write a brief news story covering an event at school, such as a friend's behaviour in class or a presentation in drama. They should write the headline, the lead, and the inverted pyramid as they would be written by the following: (a) a reporter for a responsible, truth-seeking newspaper, (b) a reporter for a sensationalist tabloid, and (c) a first-year reporter who practises a "new journalism" style of reporting.

10. Some media analysts suggest that much of a newspaper's content consists of stories packaged according to a formula. Over a period of time the reader receives a number of narrative constructions or "plots" such as one finds in conventional fiction. For example, the news is often organized as a form of confrontation, when in reality it is often much less interesting. As these "story lines" are repeated daily, the result is the creation of a type of mythic structure with its own archetypes, its own "heroes" and "villains".

As an experiment, give the class a list of topics that newspapers often report on, such as the royal family, politicians, or rock stars. See if the class can predict the story line of hypothetical news stories on these and other figures. What can they imagine about the content of the news, including headlines, certain predictable word choices, and photographs and their captions?

11. Have students write news stories that subvert the usual narrative of the news: a story on the honesty of a politician, for example, or a story of the rock star who shuns drugs. Ask students for other examples. Note that such stories may be fun to write, but students should write them seriously, keeping in mind the important factors of newspaper content, layout, and readership. (See also "The New Journalism" on pp. 216-17 of this document.)

12. Arrange for students to attend a local council meeting or some newsworthy event in their locality. Have them write a news report on this event and then compare their efforts to the report in the local press. Where did the factor of reporter selection and point of view become apparent in the news report? What emphasis did the professional reporter give that made the story different from students' versions?

13. Ask students to interview a reporter, preferably the reporter in activity 12. They could ask questions such as the following:

    - How much time and effort does a reporter actually give to research?
    - How much time is given to the actual writing of the item? To rewriting?
    - What topics are especially newsworthy?
    - To what extent do the reporter's own feelings or bias affect a news report?

14. Do not overlook the importance of the local community newspaper. There are nearly 650 community newspapers across Canada. According to the Canadian Community Newspapers Association, the circulation of non-daily community newspapers is more than eight million, while the average daily circulation of the larger metropolitan newspapers is only five million. Many students will be familiar with community newspapers, and many of the activities in this unit can be applied profitably to these papers. One useful activity, for example, would be to invite the local editor to visit the class to discuss the role of the community newspaper as well as its distinctive copy, style, and layout.

NEWSPAPER LAYOUT AND DESIGN

It is important that students realize that the effect of newspaper content is tied to newspaper layout, which is a product of numerous conscious decisions.

1. **The front page** Have students study the basic parts of a newspaper's front page. Working with their own newspapers, students can label the basic parts (see the glossary on pp. 154-55). Point out how the front page has changed in layout from the nineteenth-century newspaper to the modern tabloid. Ask students to account for the changing "face" of the newspaper page through the decades. What do the different front pages reveal about readers then and now?

2. **The gatekeeper** Students should note the decisions that have gone into the arrangement of the front page of the newspaper. They should note details of size, colour, typeface, placement or juxtaposition, and the use of ruled lines, photographs, illustrations, and captions. Ask them how the actual *form* of the newspaper affects the reader's perception of the content. For example, how does the newspaper page attempt to direct the reader's eyes to certain stories? What would happen if the ruled lines or boxes separating stories were removed?

   Create student editorial desks and have students, working in small groups, play the role of gatekeeper. Ask them to rearrange the front page to improve the organization and the overall effect of the stories. They must be prepared to justify their decisions. Raise some "wild and outlandish" questions: What would happen if there were no front page – if the newspaper began with the sports section or the want ads? If there were no photographs or advertisements?

3. **Placement and juxtaposition** Have students consider how the newspaper handles placement or juxtaposition. The object of this activity is to train students to analyse the effects of locating news stories near each other. Ask students to see if they can find any connection between apparently different stories juxtaposed on the same page. For example, a story about youth and drugs may be placed near a story on youth and unemployment. A story about the murder of a police officer may be placed beside an article on capital punishment. Ask them why this type of juxtaposition is done. Is it purely accidental or is it calculated? What is the effect on the reader, who is forced to make quick associations? Pick out examples in which the instant association actually creates a "subtext", that is, an implied narrative on the subject.

   Have students compare the front pages of two daily newspapers printed the same morning and try to account for the placement priorities of the two newspapers. Then lead a discussion of their findings.

4. **Headings** Have students examine the headlines of one daily newspaper. Is the size appropriate for the story? Are the size, typeface, and use of "decks" designed to attract the reader or simply to give information about the story? Point out that the size of letters may have a bearing on the headline, since space is often an important consideration. For example, letters like *l* and *i* count for a half unit, but letters like *w* or *m* take up more space. Another factor is the length of a word (hence *cop* for *police officer*). Ask students to what extent mechanical constraints such as type size, fonts, and length of words are factors in communicating the news and what use is made of slang, puns, jargon, and "loaded words".

   Cut the headlines from some front-page stories and put them into an envelope. Ask students to read the stories and make headlines of their own. These should capture the essence of the story. Students can then compare their headlines with the originals.

5. **Photographs** The Pulitzer Prize is awarded both to journalists for high-quality reporting and to photographers for excellence in news photography. Discuss the implications of this fact with students. Have them consider the following: If awards in newspaper excellence are given for pictures as well as for written copy, what does this suggest about the distinctive nature of this form of print? Is a photograph accompanying a news story equally important, or is it just an extra, something to make the news more interesting? What is the difference between photography and photojournalism? Ask students if they can instantly visualize any photographs that they might remember seeing in the press. What specific aspects of the photograph fix it even now in their heads?

   Obtain a number of award-winning photographs (e.g., those by such famous photographers as Margaret Bourke-White, Louis Hine, and Henri Cartier-Bresson). Discuss the photographic details that made certain photographs award winners. Have students speculate on the decisions that the photographer had to make before the photo was snapped.

   Have students examine the photographs in one issue of a newspaper and decide whether there are any potential award winners in the issue. Have them choose one photograph that accompanies a news story and examine the way in which it shapes that news item. They should consider the various decisions that were made before and after the photographer snapped the picture, as well as the following factors:

   - the choice of subject
   - the selection of details in the foreground and background of the subject
   - the camera angle
   - the caption
   - the juxtaposition of other items on the page
   - the effects on the reader

   Ask students: If you were a young politician running for office in your first election campaign, would you prefer a favourable photograph of yourself in the newspaper or a favourable editorial? What effect can a photograph have that words alone cannot? Ask students whether the fact that the caption underneath a photograph in the newspaper is not usually written by the photographer has any significance.

6. **Major activity: "Preparing for Press"** Have students prepare a newspaper front page. Such an activity requires students to enact the various specialized jobs of newspaper publication – reporter, editor and subeditor, photographer, illustrator, advertiser, publisher – as well as the role of reader. In addition, in writing and rewriting assignments, students will fulfil many of the traditional aims of the language-arts program. Final drafts of news items can be prepared by hand or by using computer software programs, which enable students to set columns, design graphics, and, generally, create a professional look.

CULTURAL JOURNALISM AND THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER

Students may wish to publish a newspaper that reports on the events of the school. A more innovative and challenging assignment for students is to put together a community newspaper. This type of publication, now generally referred to as "cultural journalism", has significantly affected school newspapers that wish to do more than simply report on the happenings around the school or neighbourhood.

In this type of newspaper students explore the history, the culture, and the interesting people of the community. A typical assignment might involve an interview with a senior citizen whose parents settled the community or perhaps with a local store owner who, unknown to everyone, has an interesting personal history, as well as some provocative views on education. The choices that students have are really as large and as interesting as their community. In this way students learn about people and places that they may have taken for granted, as well as developing many key skills, such as interviewing, selecting and evaluating information, writing, editing, and many of the other skills associated with newspaper publication.

Once the news and information have been gathered for the student newspaper, the front page and the editorial pages must be prepared. Students should keep the following suggestions in mind as they proceed:

- Remember the relative importance of each item. Remember also the reader, who is, after all, the customer. There is a demand for both "hard" and "soft" news. Consign all material as it comes in to one of three boxes: Accept, Reject, or Hold. Facts are important, but some parts of the newspaper should be set aside for analysis – to get "beneath the news". Allow space for columnists, cartoonists, and "experts".
- Rewrite to correct errors, to tighten up style, to create a more desirable effect, and so on.
- Juxtapose stories for best effect, but keep in mind the reader and, if applicable, the advertiser, who may or may not want an advertisement to be placed beside a particular item.
- Decide on photographs, illustrations, and captions.
- Write headlines for each item.
- Design an editorial page and write editorials that clearly convey the newspaper's stand on matters such as school politics or events in the community.
- Introduce such elements as late-breaking news, labour problems, and legal issues into the "office" to add interest and pressure.

MAGAZINES

Students should realize that magazines are extremely popular in Canada. Canadians spend 90 per cent of their total reading time on paid-circulation magazines. In fact, recent surveys indicate that magazines are the fastest-growing media sector in Canada. This has been the result in part of the various marketing strategies that magazines have developed. These strategies have worked because advertisers are attracted to readers with specific lifestyles and disposable incomes, and readers prefer a magazine that seems to "talk" directly to them and to their special interests.

It may be useful to obtain class sets of magazines before starting the following activities. Such class sets are often available at a discount rate and often are accompanied by study kits.

OUTDOOR MAN
OUTDOOR KID
DOGS LIFE

1. Begin with students' own experiences with this form of print. Ask them how reading a magazine is different from reading a newspaper or a book or watching a television program. Studies show that magazines are not usually read in one sitting. What difference might this make to the content and design of a magazine? Do students agree that magazines are, as some media analysts suggest, halfway between a newspaper and a book? Or are some newspapers reverting to book or magazine form?

2. Have students bring in magazines that they read themselves. Students should show the magazine and explain their reasons for purchasing it by discussing the following:
   - the target readership
   - the magazine's editorial policy, both stated and implied
   - the main features of the magazine's content and their appeal to the specific reader
   - the prose style: word choice (e.g., use of slang or jargon) and syntax (e.g., the short sentence patterns of some teen magazines)
   - layout and design: colour, typeface, arrangement of content, illustrations
   - advertising: products, design, and placement
   - the general strengths and weaknesses of the magazine
   - the future of this magazine – life expectancy, possible future changes

3. After students have completed the previous activity, give each student a special-interest magazine with which he or she is not familiar. Ask students to read through these magazines carefully and to make notes, using the topics outlined in activity 2. Students should then write a reader profile, in which they describe the magazine's reader fully.

4. Although the special-interest magazine is thriving, the traditional general-interest magazine is not doing well; several of the "big" magazines have failed. The exception is the news magazine.

   Have students read three news magazines published in the same week (one of these should be Canadian, for example, *Maclean's*) and then consider the following questions: How can three news magazines survive in such a competitive market? What strategies have news magazines adopted in order to survive in the general-interest market? You may wish to set up a worksheet to allow students to compare these magazines according to the following criteria:
   - selection and organization of news
   - editorial policy as demonstrated in editorials and in the treatment of similar stories
   - evidence of bias in word choice and syntax and in the selection of articles

- the appeal to different readerships as indicated by "hard" and "soft" news and by layout and advertisements
- special features (e.g., well-known or controversial columnists)

5. Magazine surveys show that nine out of ten magazines die in their first year. Ask students to think of a group of people for whom no magazine currently exists and then to design a magazine for this group. First, they should write down their policies in each of the following areas:
   - editorial: content and layout
   - advertising: attracting and keeping advertisers
   - circulation: strategies for attracting and raising paid circulation

   What problems do they foresee in their first year? What strategies do they propose to maintain the magazine's quality and readership while still making a profit?

6. Surveys indicate that most students read fashion magazines that are intended for both male and female readers. These are printed on high-quality paper and feature attractive illustrations and photographs as well as the latest information on fashion and trends. These glossy magazines are expensive and generally successful. Discuss the appeal of these magazines in recent years. How have they changed? How have they remained the same? Have students choose one fashion magazine and analyse it in terms of the following aspects:
   - editorial policy and readership
   - type of feature articles
   - portrayal of males and females in illustrations and copy
   - ratios: ads to copy, illustrations to print, portrayals of males to females, "soft" articles to "hard" information

7. Consult the section on advertising (pp. 173-96) for activities that involve skills in decoding magazine advertising. Male and female fashion magazines are a useful resource for teaching this important component of the print medium.

MASS-MARKET PAPERBACKS

Popular print influences students in forms other than newspapers and magazines. One important form is the mass-market paperback, both fiction and non-fiction. Of course, paperback novels are the staple of many curricula. This subsection, however, deals with the type of paperback that media analysts refer to as "genre fiction" or "supermarket erotica". A recent survey in the United States has shown that the most popular fiction categories are action and adventure stories, followed by historical fiction and romance. These are written by such well-known authors as Harold Robbins, Louis L'Amour, and Barbara Cartland, who is British. In fact, one of the major social issues raised here is the extent to which such books originate from another culture, the American.

1. This print form can be introduced through a discussion of the marketing strategies for bestsellers today (e.g., advertisements, bookshelf displays, television interviews). How do the popular novelists write a bestseller? What are some of the formulas for the various types of bestsellers? Could anyone write a bestseller if he or she just followed the "recipe"?

2. Ask students to bring to class the paperback novels that they are currently reading. Ask them to give brief plot summaries and to explain why these particular novels interest them. Ask them to examine the details of the cover: the illustration, the typeface used for the title, the publisher's blurbs, and comments from reviewers. Was the cover illustration a factor in their purchase of the book? Did students experience any letdown after the hype of the publisher's blurbs?

3. Ask students to write evaluation reports on their favourite novels, in which they explain the strengths of the novels as they see them. The reports should also address some of the strategies involved in writing and in marketing a bestseller. For example, students might discuss the following aspects:

   - the plot. What devices does the author use to make the reader keep turning the pages?
   - the characters, especially the portrayal of males and females. Why have some female or male readers objected to the types of characters found in some of these books?
   - the description of action and adventure and the handling of love and romance. Specifically, are these passages lifelike or simply fantasy and escape? How do they "work" on the reader?

4. After discussing some of the formulas of bestselling novels, ask students to write a brief plot outline of their own miniromance or action adventure. They can exploit some of the formulas or change one or two to create a humorous or realistic effect. What marketing strategies would they use to create a bestseller from their efforts?

5. Recently, "fanzines", a new type of publication, have become popular with some readers. These are offbeat but interesting publications written for and by fans of particular topics (e.g., pop stars, fictional heroes). They vary in quality, price, and subject matter, but generally they combine interesting copy and artwork and are aimed at a specialized readership. Since many students are already knowledgeable about fanzines, you might wish to encourage student projects in which students write their own fanzines for limited distribution.

Cross-Media Studies

OVERVIEW

One of the most obvious but important observations about the mass media is that they are all closely interrelated. In the activities sections on each medium, there are numerous examples of cross-media phenomena and, in many cases, suggestions about extending an activity through material covered in another medium. The purpose of this section is to present several examples of media topics or issues that require an intensive cross-media analysis.

Media interdependence is obvious in news coverage, which harnesses the resources of print, television, and radio. Of special interest are those extensively reported events that allow for dynamic, relevant teaching, such as a royal visit, an incident of international terrorism, or the launching of a big new television miniseries. Teachers need to have the flexibility and the appropriate media-literacy strategies to take advantage of these opportunities.

Many of the issues of our time are also reflected in all or several of the mass media. Cultural nationalism and multiculturalism, the arms race, ecological concerns, the popular representations of sexuality and violence, the problems of censorship – these are just some of the topics that demand cross-media analysis.

Another aspect of media interdependence is the trend of one medium to promote or "piggyback" on another. For example, rock video serves to sell records and to promote concerts. This has an impact on radio programming, which inevitably depends heavily on pop music trends. Rock music has also influenced the look of many fast-paced television commercials, especially those that are targeted to young people.

The effective application of media-literacy concepts usually depends on the integration of several media. Implicit in this analysis is the notion that each medium codifies reality in different ways. It is necessary, therefore, to see how messages may be altered as information crosses from one medium to another. The following sections illustrate how in-depth units in cross-media study can be developed. They demonstrate how important social issues reflected in the media and popular culture can be explored in the classroom.

ADVERTISING

> Ads are really doing their work when you don't notice them.
>
> Marshall McLuhan

> Advertising now compares with such longstanding institutions as the school and the church in the magnitude of its social influence.
>
> David Potter

INTRODUCTION

Although advertising is not a medium in itself, it is the driving, often the shaping, force behind most of the media. Its presence in our society is so pervasive, and its influence so great, that it requires close examination on its own. Advertising is part of the almost invisible currency of everyday life. Students live in a society where they see or hear approximately 500 advertisements a day; by the time they graduate from high school, they will have been exposed to more than 350 000 television commercials promoting "the good life" in one form or another. Few people are exempt. By the age of sixty, the average person will have been exposed to 50 million advertisements. Impressionable young minds are particularly vulnerable to these strong messages, many of which are directed at children and adolescents.

While the advertisement is the commercial raison d'être without which the media product would not be distributed, it is more than simply the financial support that makes possible either the broadcasting of programs or the publication of print. It is, in fact, an integral part of the content of almost all mass media. Advertisements often give information at the same time as they convey a narrative or an ideology of their own. Sometimes, as in the case of fashion magazines or rock videos, the advertisement becomes the entertainment itself.

Advertising is presented through a variety of media: daily and weekly newspapers, catalogues and mailing pieces (commonly referred to as "junk mail"), television, radio, billboards, bulletin-board displays, posters, neon signs, sky writing, bumper stickers, cards on public transit, telephone directories, business cards, magazines, weekend supplements, almanacs, religious and school publications, caps, sports bags, and even T-shirts.

Advertising sells goods and services, but it is also used to market politicians and political parties. As more and more of the public have come to rely on television rather than newspapers as their primary source of news, there has been a corresponding shift in election campaigns: the number of television advertisements in the 1980 national political campaign nearly doubled that of the 1979 campaign. As well, there has been a shift in emphasis from political policies to politicians' images. It is obvious that advertisers' knowledge about selling in one field can be applied to another field.

History Preindustrial society produced neither the variety nor the volume of goods to make advertising an important part of the economy. Merchants' signs, the cries of street hawkers, and word of mouth were enough to inform the public of the availability of products. The sweeping changes of the Industrial Revolution, however, produced the products, the new customers, the technology, and the beginnings of mass literacy that were necessary for the development of advertising. Each subsequent development of media technology paved the way for the further development of the advertising industry, with a growth and diversification from oral advertising to handbills and posters, to newspapers and photo magazines, and ultimately to radio and television.

The advertising industry did not really begin to boom until after the Second World War, when the new knowledge generated by motivation research, the vastly increased prosperity of North America, and the emergence of television all converged. Today, advertising no longer simply informs individuals of the availability of products: it is used to identify, define, or create markets, and it employs a variety of powerful techniques to persuade people to buy the goods, services, or ideas presented.

Economics In 1984 the gross expenditure for advertising in Canada was six billion dollars. It is worth examining the source of these advertising dollars. The accompanying table lists Canada's leading advertisers. The modern consumer will not be surprised to discover that manufacturers of household supplies and automobiles, breweries, and food companies dominate the list; the pre-eminent position of the federal government may be less common knowledge.

Leading Canadian Advertisers, 1984

1.	Government of Canada	$95 767 946
2.	Procter & Gamble	46 339 143
3.	John Labatt	37 581 241
4.	The Molson Companies	35 297 759
5.	Dart and Kraft	32 489 845
6.	Government of Ontario	32 086 361
7.	Rothmans of Canada	31 045 574
8.	General Motors of Canada	30 011 258
9.	Nabisco Brands	24 471 874
10.	General Foods	22 945 590
11.	Unilever	21 830 065
12.	Ford Motor of Canada	20 364 261

Source: *Marketing*, May 13, 1985, page 1

In 1984-85 advertisers in Canada spent more of their money on daily newspapers than on any other medium. Television advertising sales, which are growing rapidly, followed closely.

Today, it often costs more to produce one thirty-second commercial than an entire television program. The cost of placing a sixty-second advertisement on special television programs such as the Super Bowl can run as high as one million dollars.

Audience Advertisers buy audiences, using a great deal of data to determine how to gain and hold their attention. Demographic research is done to determine the dollar value of commercial minutes on programs, based on the estimated size of their audiences. Research companies do not simply establish the size of television audiences: what potential advertisers purchase are detailed demographic breakdowns indicating the age, sex, income level, education, and purchasing habits of the audiences they are considering buying from broadcasters.

Because of the high cost of producing and distributing advertisements, a great deal of detailed information and research goes into the development of effective advertising strategies. Sophisticated technology and a variety of research tools are used on test groups to refine the production of advertisements. These tools may include questionnaires, in-depth interviews, large-scale market surveys, applications of research into brain hemisphericity, and laboratory studies of the psychological and physiological responses of typical consumers to advertisements. Nevertheless, audiences are often unpredictable; in spite of the sophisticated tools at the disposal of advertisers, many campaigns fail.

Techniques Because advertisements are generally among the most carefully prepared presentations in the media, it is not surprising that they are often outstanding, both technically and aesthetically. Carefully crafted advertisements appeal to people's desire to be loved, to be healthy and sexually attractive, to be accepted by their friends, and to have security and comfort. Advertisements appeal to a sense of family and a need to belong. They feign intimacy, use testimonials by celebrities, and can dazzle their audience or enhance the appearance of the product through special techniques.

Many of these techniques are found in lifestyle advertisements, which may be described as the quintessence of the consumer culture. They are best exemplified in the beer commercials, which present a vision of a carefree life where ever-youthful, physically fit individuals enjoy beer in sunny settings while pursuing vigorous activity. In this context, advertisers sell an image that plays on human desires for heightened experience and social acceptance.

The impact of advertising on society Advertising is subject to strict government codes and, because it is one of the most public operations of business, it has been the focus of major criticism. On the one hand are those who accuse the advertising industry of manipulating relatively defenceless consumers by means of the carefully calculated use of sex, emotional appeals, half-truths, and subliminal techniques. Indeed, advertisers seem to have enormous resources at their disposal; they may spend more on the production and distribution of a single thirty-second commercial than it is possible to invest in a document such as this, which aims to provide students with some defences against those techniques.

In defence of advertising, on the other hand, are those who point out that it is primarily a reflector of the needs and values of a consumer-oriented society and that it serves the needs of the economic system for the rapid exchange of goods, the encouragement of consumption, and the creation of new needs and markets. Regardless of one's position in this debate, it is clear that these apparently innocuous messages can determine the content of programs or publications, influence values, shape eating habits, encourage or discourage drug use, and determine the outcome of the elections of political leaders.

Clearly, schools have a responsibility to develop students' consumer awareness and to help them become reflective sceptics, able to maintain a critical perspective on their consumer culture. The challenge for educators is to provide students with the media-literacy skills they need to decode the content of advertising, to understand its appeals and techniques, and to develop a balanced view of its role in the society and economy. In order to function as free citizens in a democratic society, they must develop the critical autonomy that will allow them to make informed choices and learn to avoid being used for ends that are not their own.

Advertising standards The following code of advertising standards was prepared by the Canadian Advertising Foundation. It is reproduced here for the convenience of teachers.

CANADIAN CODE OF ADVERTISING STANDARDS

1. Accuracy, Clarity

(a) Advertisements may not contain inaccurate or deceptive claims or statements, either direct or implied, with regard to price, availability or performance of a product or service. Advertisers and advertising agencies must be prepared to substantiate their claims promptly to the Council. Note that, in assessing the truthfulness of a message, the Council's concern is not with the intent of the sender or the precise legality of the phrasing. Rather the focus is on the message as received or perceived, that is, the general impression conveyed by the advertisement.

(b) Advertisements may be deceptive by omission of relevant information.

(c) All pertinent details of advertised offers should be clearly stated.

(d) Disclaimers or asterisked information should be so located and large enough as to be clearly visible.

2. Disguised Advertising Techniques

No advertisement shall be presented in a format which conceals its commercial intent. Advertising content, for example, should be clearly distinguished from editorial or program content. Similarly, advertisements are not acceptable if they attempt to use images or sounds of very brief duration or physically weak visual or oral techniques to convey messages below the threshold of normal human awareness. (Such messages are sometimes referred to as subliminal.)

3. Price Claims

(a) No advertisement shall include deceptive price claims or discounts, unrealistic price comparisons or exaggerated claims as to worth or value. "Regular price", "suggested retail price", "manufacturer's list price", and "fair market value" are misleading terms when used by an individual advertiser to indicate a savings – unless they represent prices at which a reasonable number of the item was actually sold within the preceding six months in the market where the advertisement appears.

(b) Where price discounts are offered, qualifying statements such as "up to", "xx off", etc., should be in easily readable type, in close proximity to the prices quoted, and, where practical, regular prices should be included.

(c) Prices quoted in Canadian media in other than Canadian funds should be so identified.

4. Testimonials

Testimonials must reflect the genuine, reasonably current opinion of the endorser and should be based upon adequate information about or experience with the product or service advertised. This is not meant to preclude, however, an actor or actress presenting the true experience of an actual number of users or presenting technical information about the manufacture or testing of the product.

5. Bait and Switch

The consumer must be given a fair opportunity to purchase the goods or services offered at the terms presented. If supply of the sale item is limited, this should be mentioned in the advertisement. Refusal to show or demonstrate the product, disparagement of the advertised product by sales personnel, or demonstration of a product of superior quality are all illustrations of the "bait and switch" technique which is a contravention of the Code.

6. Comparative Advertising

Advertisements must not discredit or attack unfairly other products, services or advertisements, or exaggerate the nature or importance of competitive differences. When comparisons are made with competing products or services, the advertiser must make substantiation available promptly upon the request from the Council.

7. Professional or Scientific Claims
Advertisements must not distort the true meaning of statements made by professionals or scientific authorities. Advertising claims must not imply they have a scientific basis they do not truly possess. Scientific terms, technical terms, etc., should be used in general advertising only with a full sense of responsibility to the lay public.

8. Slimming, Weight Loss
Advertisements shall not state or imply that foods, food substitutes, meal replacements, appetite suppressants, creams, lotions or special devices will enable a person to lose weight or girth except in conjunction with a balanced, calorie-controlled diet; and reference to the part played by such a diet shall be so located and large enough to be clearly visible.

9. Guarantees
No advertisement shall offer a guarantee or warranty, unless the guarantee or warranty is fully explained as to conditions and limits and the name of the guarantor or warrantor, or it is indicated where such information may be obtained.

10. Imitation
No advertiser shall deliberately imitate the copy, slogans, or illustrations of another advertiser in such a manner as to mislead the consumer. The accidental or unintentional use of similar or like general slogans or themes shall not be considered a contravention of this Code, but advertisers, media, and advertising agencies should be alert to the confusion that can result from such coincidences and should seek to eliminate them when discovered.

11. Safety
Advertisements shall not display a disregard for public safety or depict situations which might encourage unsafe or dangerous practices, particularly when portraying products in normal use.

12. Exploitation of Human Misery
Advertisements may not hold out false hope in the form of a cure or relief for the mental or physically handicapped, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

13. Superstition and Fears
Advertisements must not exploit the superstitious, or play upon fears to mislead the consumer into purchasing the advertised product or service.

14. Advertising to Children
Advertisements to children impose a special responsibility upon the advertiser and the media. Such advertisements should not exploit their credulity, lack of experience, or their sense of loyalty, and should not present information or illustrations which might result in their physical, mental or moral harm.

15. Advertising to Minors
Products prohibited from sale to minors must not be advertised in such a way as to appeal particularly to persons under legal age and people featured in advertisements for such products must be, and clearly seen to be, adults under the law.

16. Taste, Opinion, Public Decency
As a public communication process, advertising should not present demeaning or derogatory portrayals of individuals or groups and should not contain anything likely, in the light of generally prevailing standards, to cause deep or widespread offence. It is recognized, of course, that standards of taste are subjective and vary widely from person to person and community to community, and are, indeed, subject to constant change.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

Advertisements are everywhere. Students dismiss them (even when they are wearing them) and tend to think that they are not affected by them. Introductory activities in the classroom should, therefore, make students aware of the omnipresence of ads, their artfulness, the enormous cost and effort that go into their creation, and the extent of their impact on everyone.

1. A good place to begin is with the advertisements that students choose themselves. Students should consider the following questions:
   - Are there magazine advertisements pinned up in your locker? Bring them to class and discuss the aspects of these ads that appeal to you. Do advertisers deliberately build these features into their ads?
   - How many people in the class are wearing or carrying advertising? Why? What is in it for them? What is in it for the manufacturers?
   - What is your favourite advertisement? Why? In how much detail can you remember it? What are the common features of advertisements that appeal to teenagers? Which advertisement do you dislike most? Why? Which one do you find most memorable? Why?
   - How much attention do you pay to advertisements? How common is "zapping" (i.e., using a remote control to cut the audio or to change channels during a commercial)? Can advertisements work if people do not pay much attention to them? Can they work if people do not like them?
   - What kind of attention do you give to magazine advertisements? Do the advertisers who place their advertisements in magazines know that people often barely glance at them?
   - What tends to linger in your mind most from a television advertisement – the audio, the video, or both? Do you ever find yourself humming or singing parts of television commercials? Which ones?
   - What kinds of things are advertised on your favourite radio station? Do radio stations with different kinds of programming advertise different products and services? Are there radio stations without advertising? Why? How do they survive?
   - What kinds of advertisements are broadcast during children's programs? During sports programs? During afternoon soaps? What are the connections between the program and its advertisements?
2. Have students keep a log of the number of advertisements that they see or hear in one day (or in one week). Remind them to include ads from all sources – billboards, posters, public transit vehicles, clothing, and so on, as well as television, radio, and print. The results can be summarized or charted and presented to the class.

3. Have students research:

   a) the range of costs for the production of a thirty-second commercial for a Canadian product;

   b) the range of costs for broadcasting a thirty-second commercial on network and local television, inside and outside of prime time;

   c) the range of costs for placing advertisements in major Canadian magazines, or in a local newspaper.

   Have students use the results of their research to generalize about the factors affecting the costs of placing advertisements.

4. Show and discuss one or more of the following films on the topic of advertising:

   - *Bronswick Affair.* National Film Board, 1978. 16 mm, colour, 23 min.
   - *Have I Ever Lied to You Before?* National Film Board, 1976. 16 mm, colour, 56 min.
   - *Killing Us Softly.* Cambridge Documentary Films, 1979. 16 mm, colour, 30 min. Recommended only for Senior students.
   - *Seeing Through Commercials: A Children's Guide to TV Advertising.* Vision Films, 1976. 16 mm, colour, 15 min.
   - *The Thirty Second Dream.* Mass Media Ministries, 1978. 16 mm, colour, 15 min.
   - *TV Sale.* National Film Board, 1975. 16 mm, colour, 15 min.

5. Have students do research to answer the following questions:

   a) How many commercials are there during an hour of prime-time television? How long are they? Why do advertisers choose one length over another? How often do the advertising breaks come? What is the total number of minutes of advertising per hour during prime time? How many minutes of commercials are there in an hour outside of prime time? Is there a difference in these numbers between Canadian and American television? Are there any television programs without advertising? How are they supported?

   b) How many minutes per hour of advertising are there on radio stations? How long are radio commercials? How often do commercial breaks come? How is the placement of commercials in the program designed to gain and hold an audience?

6. Have students examine a variety of magazines and then answer the following questions: How much of a news magazine is made up of advertising? How much of a special-interest magazine (e.g., a photography, fashion, or automobile magazine) is made up of advertising? Why is there a difference? How much of a local newspaper is made up of advertising? How much of the cost of print media like these is paid by advertising and how much is covered by the selling price? How can you find out?

DECODING ADVERTISEMENTS

Students must develop a range of visual and analytical skills in order to deal with the content of advertising. They can do this by carefully examining and deconstructing a number of advertisements from a particular medium. Once students have some familiarity with decoding skills, there are many further activities that become possible.

Note that any thorough deconstruction of advertisements will reveal many that make extensive use of sexuality. It will be necessary for teachers of younger students to exercise discretion in drawing this to their students' attention. The task for the teacher is to place the use of sexuality within the broader context of the use by advertisers of all techniques that manipulate individuals without their being aware of it.

1. **Decoding magazine advertisements** If this activity is being done with the whole class, it is best to make slides of the advertisements to be discussed and project them on a screen. The discussion of any advertisements should begin with the dominant impression that it leaves on the viewer or reader. Students should be reminded that many magazine advertisements are designed to achieve their effect in a second or two.

   It is best to start with students' general, overall impression of the advertisement before moving into closer analysis. Detailed deconstruction should deal with some or all of the following:

   a) the language of the advertisement

   - What does the name of the product communicate?
   - What is the tone of the verbal part of the advertisement?
   - What human needs, fears, or desires are being appealed to? Concerns about health, sexuality, the family? The need to be loved? The need for security and comfort? The need for social acceptance?
   - What claims are being made? How are they qualified? Does the advertisement use "weasel words"; irrelevant, vague, or unfinished claims; testimonials; "techno-babble"; flattery; or rhetorical questions? If so, what are their effects? (For more detailed treatment, see activity 4 on pp. 186-87.)
   - Are there any puns or ambivalent statements used in the advertisement?

   b) the visual features of the advertisement

   - What is the general ambience or mood of the advertisement, and how is it created?
   - What kind of typeface is used in the advertisement? Discuss its impact and appropriateness. Where is the print component located? Why? How does it contribute to the advertisement?

- Is there a product logo? What does it communicate?
- What is the colour scheme of the advertisement? How does it relate to the product or to the atmosphere being established in the advertisement?
- How is light used in the advertisement?
- How are the visual items in the advertisement arranged? What items are juxtaposed? Is there a lot of white space? What is the centre of interest in the advertisement? To what part of the advertisement are the reader's eyes drawn? Is the effect pleasing or arresting?
- Does the product appear in the advertisement? Where is it located? Why? What is the shape of the product or product container? What does it communicate? How appropriate or effective is it?
- What is the relationship of the visual component of the advertisement to the verbal component? Does it support the content of the verbal component or does it accomplish different objectives?

c) the actual content of the advertisement

- What is happening in the advertisement? Does it have a plot? Are there status symbols present? What are the people in it doing? What kind of people are they? How are they dressed? What images do they project? Which of their qualities are associated with the product? Are any of the people in the advertisement stereotyped? Can you "find" yourself, your peers, or other people that you know in the advertisement?
- What does the setting communicate? What kind of atmosphere does it establish? How is this done?
- Is there a subtext? That is, is there more to the advertisement than is visible on the surface? Are the models doing anything that might suggest something beyond the surface meaning in the advertisement?
- Does it look as if something has just happened or is about to happen?
- What is communicated by the body language of the people in the advertisement? For example, how are the models positioned? What is their posture? Are there differences in the posture, relative positioning, or body language of the men and women in the advertisement?
- Is there anything in the advertisement that could be considered a symbol?

d) the advertisement as a whole

- How does the advertisement work? What are the major emotional "hooks" it uses to shape our attitudes to the product and to ensure that we remember it? How effective do you think the advertisement is?

- Who do you think is the intended target of the advertisement? Was the advertisement placed in the best publication for its target audience?
- What are the values or ideology underlying the advertisement? Do you agree or disagree with them? Why? (See activity 4 on pp. 50-51 of this document.)
- What does the advertisement say about our society? What sociological, political, economic, or cultural attitudes are indirectly reflected in the advertisement? (An advertisement may be about blue jeans, but it could also indirectly reflect sexism, alienation, stereotyping, conformism, generational conflict, loneliness, and elitism.)

Following the class activity outlined above, students can bring to class advertisements of their own choice and, working alone or in groups, deconstruct them. They can then write reports on their analyses or present their observations orally to the class. Students can also design and sketch a magazine advertisement of their own, followed by a written or an oral explanation of how the advertisement would work.

2. **Decoding television commercials** The study of television commercials, quite apart from its relevance to consumer-awareness skills, is a particularly useful activity for the development of important media-literacy concepts. Television commercials are the reason television programs are made, and they are generally the most carefully produced material on television. The cost of the production of a thirty-second commercial can often exceed that of the half-hour program with which it is shown. In its brevity, density of information, and reliance on image, allusion, and suggestiveness, the television commercial has much in common with poetry. Thus, the study of television commercials can produce a sensitivity to visual material and the central concerns of media literacy that may carry over to many other areas of study. Students frequently report that the study of television commercials leads to radical changes in the way in which they perceive everything that they see on television.

   To introduce the topic, a short, general discussion about television commercials may be worthwhile. Students should be made aware of the cost of producing them, including the differences between the relatively low-cost commercials made to be broadcast to comparatively small audiences on local stations and the high-budget commercials produced for network audiences. The discussion should also touch on the way in which people watch (or try not to watch) commercials.

   The best way to examine television commercials in class is on videotape. When permission to use the commercial has been obtained, it can be shown several times, and the tape can be frozen as often as necessary to allow students to examine the actual content or composition of different shots. Fast-paced material can be shown in slow motion, and the audio and video tracks can be examined separately. (Often they have very different content.)

Shot counting is an extremely useful short exercise for students who are unfamiliar with the deconstruction of film or video material. Students simply count the number of shots in a thirty-second commercial. The actual number of shots is not particularly important, except as a measure of the pace of the advertisement; however, the activity forces students to see the commercial as a construction of many separate parts and, by extension, the result of many separate decisions. Visual material is normally processed more or less unconsciously by the right side of the brain; the activity of counting forces the left side of the brain, with its more linear critical faculties, to remain involved. Television and film tend to be perceived by students as seamless extensions of reality; this exercise makes the seams visible. (Some students will, in fact, find this exercise difficult to complete: halfway through, these students are swept away by the images, and the left side of their brain goes back to sleep.)

Once students are aware of the different shots making up the commercial, the visual decoding skills described in the section on magazine advertisements can be focused as necessary on each individual shot. The questions dealing with the content and with the advertisement as a whole will also be relevant. The following are features of the advertisement that students should examine:

a) length

- How long is the commercial? How does length affect content and technique?

b) editing

- What is the pace of the commercial? Is it suitable for the content and the intended audience? What is the effect of fast or slow cuts? Does a fast pace make it easy or difficult to look away from the screen? Do older people react differently than younger people to fast-paced material? Is there variation of pace or are all the shots of approximately the same length?
- What kinds of transitions are used between shots? Are they cuts, dissolves, or wipes? What is the effect of each?
- What kinds of material are juxtaposed in successive shots? What are the connections – visual, narrative, or thematic – between shots?
- Do fifteen-second commercials differ in their pace from those lasting thirty or sixty seconds? How effective are short commercials in countering "zapping" or "channel hopping" as a means of avoiding commercials?

c) audio component

- Does the advertisement use music, voice, voice-over, sound effects, or some combination of these? What kind of music is used and what is its effect? What are the tone and the pace of the voice? How do they affect the commercial? Is the voice-over spoken by a man or a woman? Why?
- What is the content of the audio and what is its relationship to the product? Is its content the same as or different from the visual part of the commercial?

d) camera work

- What types of shots (e.g., close-up, long shot) are used? What are their effects?
- What are the effects of such techniques as zooming in or out? Shooting products or actors from low, high, or normal angles?
- Does the commercial use a sharp or soft focus? Unusual lighting or colour effects? Why?
- Does it use animation or special effects? Are these appropriate for the product or effective at gaining and holding attention?

e) graphics

- What use does the commercial make of lettering or logos? Where are these placed on the screen? Where are they placed in the time frame of the commercial?
- What message do they carry? Is it different from or the same as the message carried by the visual part of the commercial?

f) audience

- Is the commercial a local or a network one (i.e., one intended to be broadcast nationally)?
- What is the age, sex, or economic level of its target audience?
- What connections are there among the commercial, its intended audience, and the program with which it was shown?

g) general

- Is it a narrative commercial? A "lifestyle" commercial? A simple "hype" of the product?
- Does the commercial involve a variety of expensive location shots, or was it all shot in one place?
- Does it use testimonials or celebrities or their look-alikes?
- Does it use well-known popular music? Does it look like a rock video?
- How many "jolts per minute" are there and what is their effect?

Following the class activity outlined above, students, working in groups or individually, can select and analyse one or more other commercials. They can then write reports on their analyses or present their observations orally to the class. Students can also work in groups to prepare a storyboard or a script for a television commercial. They can then present a written or an oral explanation of how they expect the commercial to work. If videotaping and editing facilities are available, they should be encouraged to produce their commercials.

3. **Coding and decoding body language** The following activities will give students practice in decoding body language and thus an approach to understanding the poses used in, and the body-language messages conveyed by, advertisements that involve models.

   a) Students, working in pairs, silently indicate to their partner various emotions, such as fear, hate, anger, love, and indifference.

   b) Students examine a number of magazine or television advertisements, paying particular attention to the body language of the models or actors.

   c) Again in pairs, students strike poses similar to those they find in the advertisements they are examining, attempting to "read" the message presented and recording their responses. They then discuss their responses and attempt to correlate them with the intention of the original advertisements.

   d) Students attempt to refine their decoding skills by striking poses drawn from advertisements, altering one small detail at a time (e.g., downcast eyes become a level stare, pelvic tilt is altered, a hand position is changed), and then evaluating the difference.

   e) Students parody the original advertisements by making subtle alterations that defeat their intention.

4. **The language of advertisement claims** Have students collect examples of advertisements in the various categories outlined on the accompanying chart.

Advertising Claims

Name	Description	Example
Testimonial	The endorsement of a product by a well-known person or organization	"Joe Hockey uses Face Power aftershave lotion."
Transfer	The transfer of the qualities of one idea to those of another	"Smoke Mint Fresh and get a breath of springtime."
Plain folks	The technique of talking down to the masses in order to appear to be one of them	"Use Whitewash. It makes your clothes as white as Momma used to wash them."

Bandwagon	The suggestion that everyone is doing it	"Sparkle! Canada's #1 best-seller."
Snob appeal	The association of desirable life	"She lives in Oakville. She spends her winters in the Swiss Alps. She drives a Mercmobile. Her perfume – TUSK."
Facts and figures	The implication that figures and statistics prove a point beyond dispute	"No-ache Pills – the only headache tablet with 30 mg of pain reliever."
Hidden fears	The exploitation of an individual's fears and insecurities	"Don't lose friends. Use Sweet-Pit, the friendly deodorant."
Repetition	The constant statement of an idea in order to fix the image of a product in a person's mind	"Finally – Natural Glow! The natural shampoo with nature's ingredients to bring out the natural glow in you."
Magic ingredients	The implication that a product's effectiveness is scientifically based	"Drink Eau-Boire, the mineral water with H_2O."
Weasel words	The use of vague qualifiers or disclaimers, such as "helps", "fights", "up to", and "virtually" to mislead the consumer into thinking the product is better than it really is	"Use Zit-Kwit, the only skin medicine that helps fight virtually all skin blemishes."

Based on Jeffrey Schrank, "The Language of Advertising Claims", *Media and Methods* 10 (March 1974): 44-51.

5. **Parity products** "Parity products" are products that are essentially the same regardless of the manufacturer (e.g., gasoline, mufflers, soft drinks, beer, laundry detergents). Competition is intense among parity products, and advertising campaigns for them typically feature large budgets and skilfully worded claims. Have students collect examples of parity-product advertisements, compare them, and carefully analyse their claims and techniques.

6. **The unstated fear** A careful analysis of advertisements will often reveal that beneath their messages is a company's unstated "fear". For example, many distilleries are aware that their products are not consumed as much as they would like by women, and many of their advertisements reflect this concern. Have students locate and explain the unstated "fear" in several different advertisements.

7. **Colours in advertisements** Ask students to make up lists of products, slogans, and company names that contain the name of a colour (e.g., Red Rose Tea, Green Giant). They can then compare their lists and discuss the impressions that different colours create.

8. **Logos** (a) Have students examine a variety of product logos, evaluating and explaining their effectiveness. (b) Ask students to design a logo for their community, their school, their class, or their own names.

9. **Typefaces** Ask students to experiment with using a variety of different typefaces (from newspapers or Letraset) for the same title or product name and compare the results. They can then take existing magazine advertisements, replace the typefaces used with radically different ones, and evaluate the effect.

10. **Decoding packages** Have students decode the packages or containers of some popular products, such as soaps or beauty aids. They should examine package size, shape, colour, texture, label, logos, graphics – everything for which there has been a design decision – and attempt to determine the reason for each decision and the degree of its effectiveness. Following this, they can design, individually or in groups, packages of their own, which they can then present to the class for discussion and evaluation.

11. **Product names** Have students examine product names, attempting to decide why they were chosen. Then ask them to make up their own names for everyday products or for imaginary products.

12. **Radio scripts** Have students transcribe a number of radio commercials and then tape several versions of each, varying pitch, volume, tone, and speed. They should then listen to their tapes and evaluate the effects of the variations.

13. **Celebrity endorsements** Have students (a) examine and evaluate advertisements that feature celebrities endorsing products; (b) list several products, suggest celebrities who could be associated with them, and defend their choices; (c) debate the ethics of using celebrities to endorse products.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY IN ADVERTISEMENTS

1. This exercise will help students to see the many facets of our pervasive consumer culture and the way in which advertisements help to create and reinforce the great myths (the assumed truths) that convey the meaning of our lives. Students describe in a letter the impressions that intelligent aliens whose only knowledge of the world has come from advertisements have of humans. The following are some of the aspects of life on earth that the aliens should try to determine from their analysis of advertisements:
   - what earthlings look like
   - what they eat and drink
   - what constitutes wealth and poverty and what average standards of living are
   - how people earn their living, what work is, and what the necessities of life are
   - how people spend their leisure time and how fast the pace of life is
   - the relationship between men and women
   - what women are like, what men are like, and how they differ
   - what kinds of relationships exist between parents and children
   - what it means to be sexually attractive
   - what constitutes happiness for people
   - what our average age is
   - what senior citizens are concerned about
   - what the values of humans are (i.e., what they worship, most desire, aspire to, or most fear)

Humorous approaches may be most appropriate for this activity. Students' subsequent discussions should focus on the extent to which the individual's view of reality is affected by advertisements.

It is important to deal with the impact of advertising on students whose cultural or ethnic background differs from the one that is assumed in most of the advertising students see. A variation that would integrate multicultural concerns into this activity would require students to repeat the exercise from the perspective of people from a developing country. Another possibility is to ask students with a different cultural or ethnic background to bring in samples of advertising from the media in their native countries or from the ethnic media in Canada. A comparative study of the advertising of different cultures should prove enlightening for members of any cultural, racial, or ethnic group. Note that this activity could be completed in a written or an oral form rather than as a dramatization.

2. Have students, working from a set of magazines, collect and examine advertisements for products that are designed to enhance the presentation of self, that is, products intended to change, enhance, disguise, or beautify various parts of the body. Students make separate lists of the products for men and women, organizing them according to the part of the body with which they deal. Students can then discuss a variety of issues: the claims made, the reasons for the unacceptability of the natural state, the concept of beauty as a changeable social construct, the economics of attraction, the creation of needs.

3. Students write descriptions of a hypothetical man and woman based entirely on words and phrases gleaned from advertisements. Connectives, articles, and so forth can be added, but all the substantive words must come from the advertisements. Students then discuss the content of, and the differences between, the two descriptions.

4. Students debate the idea that our concept of what people do and how they behave when they are having fun in their leisure time is shaped by what we see people doing in soft-drink, beer, and chewing-gum commercials.

5. Pairs of students improvise a television advertisement using one of the following pairs of roles: parent/child, teacher/student, boyfriend/girlfriend, husband/wife, boss/employee, ethnic-minority member/ethnic-majority member, recent immigrant/established immigrant, brother/sister, principal/teacher, politician/voter, coach/team member. Students then discuss the content and implications of what they have created. For example, what did they learn about the nature of roles and stereotypes and their use in advertising? Note that a third person could be added to any of the above situations.

6. Students, in groups of five, are given five minutes to improvise and dramatize a television commercial with one of the following settings: a cocktail party, a dance, a wedding, a fire, a baseball game, a beach. Students discuss the content and implications of their creations. For example, to what extent was the content of their scene similar to that of commercials seen on television? As an extension, have students repeat the commercial with a setting that is very different in some way from the original (e.g., a stormy day on a beach instead of a pleasant beach party or a barroom brawl instead of a dance).

SPECIAL ADVERTISEMENTS FOR SPECIAL TARGETS

1. Students simulate the role of executives of an advertising company and plan an advertising campaign for a specific product, defining their market, establishing a budget, and deciding such things as approach, packaging, distribution, and duration. They then present their campaign plan for acceptance or revision to another group of students, who play the role of executives of the company whose product is being marketed. Both groups must support the positions they take.

2. Students simulate the role of the creative team of an advertising company in planning a magazine, radio, or television advertisement. The plan should consist of a sketch of a magazine advertisement, a script for a radio commercial, or a storyboard for a television commercial, depending on the medium chosen. Members of the groups should be prepared to suggest alternatives when they meet with other students representing the company whose product is being advertised. At that time the creative team presents and defends its plan, while the company team critiques and evaluates the proposed advertisement. If production facilities are available, some groups may produce their advertisements. (The film *Nothing in Common* [Columbia, 1986; 16 mm, colour, 120 min] illustrates the making of a television commercial from beginning to end. Especially well done is the brainstorming conducted by the advertising agency team in the film.)

3. Students discuss and list the steps involved in marketing a new breakfast cereal. After examining existing cereal boxes, they can revise their lists. Students then design boxes for a new product. (These can be made by wrapping an old cereal box in paper.) Students can also script and tape a radio commercial or storyboard a television commercial for their product.

4. Students cut out advertisements from a general-interest magazine and insert them into a special-interest magazine, or vice versa, and then discuss the effect. As a variation, they can discuss inserting television commercials from one type of program into the commercial breaks in another type.

5. Much of the advertising that our students see daily is either worn or carried by them in the form of gym bags, caps, shirts, and so forth. In fact, large soft-drink companies have recently begun setting up their own retail outlets to market clothing carrying their advertising. Discuss with students both their own motives and those of the advertisers in this relationship. Then have students design an effective T-shirt or gym-bag advertisement.

6. One of the more controversial advertising developments in recent years has been the integration of children's entertainment and children's toys. Typically, an attractive doll or "family" of dolls is created, and then a number of interesting children's cartoons that feature the dolls as central characters are produced. Children thus end up watching what are essentially half-hour advertisements for dolls and their accessories. Perhaps the best way to help students become aware of this is to involve them in a simulation in which they are asked to design and market a doll or toy using television cartoons as their advertising vehicle. Have students discuss the ethical implications of these practices.

7. Junk food has become a controversial topic with many parents and teachers.
   a) Ask students to list food and drink products that are advertised on television. Can they identify examples of exaggeration? Of accurate description?
   b) Often words such as "part of a balanced breakfast" are superimposed over a scene in a food commercial. Ask students what these words mean and why they are included. Why are they in print form rather than spoken?

8. Ask students to list toys and games that are advertised on television and to evaluate the truthfulness of the claims made for them. Then ask them to decode the following messages, devising fuller explanations for them: "sold separately", "assembly required", "batteries not included".

9. Have students plan an advertisement to promote something beneficial for children, such as a safety product or streetproofing kit.

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

1. When a national or provincial election is announced, arrange to have a group of students sample systematically the political advertising broadcast on television during prime time. Have them keep records of (a) the length of the advertisements being aired, (b) the party or candidate being presented, (c) the times at which the advertisements are shown, and (d) whether the advertisements stress issues or image. At the end of the campaign, students present and discuss their findings.

2. Students, in groups, plan a national political campaign for a real or fictitious candidate. They should focus on such questions as the following: What qualities of the candidate should be emphasized? Which should be downplayed? How much emphasis should be placed on the issues? How much on the candidate's image? How should funds be raised? How should the campaign budget be apportioned among the various media? How often should the candidate appear in public? On television?

3. Activity 2 can be extended by having students write speeches, compose newspaper advertisements, script radio commercials, and script or storyboard television commercials. Further extensions could involve the actual delivery of the speeches and the production of some or all of the advertisements. Good sources for material include Joe McGuiness, *The Selling of the President* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984), both the book and the film version, and the feature film *The Candidate* (Warner Brothers, 1972; 109 min). (Joe McGuiness has written the definitive book on how Presidents Nixon, Carter, and Ford were promoted by the various advertising agencies. *The Candidate* shows how a good-looking man can have his image marketed and be politically successful even if he is ill-informed on the issues.) Groups of students might also plan an advertising campaign for a candidate running for the presidency of the student council or a local youth organization.

4. Some media critics claim that political advertisements have simply taken the techniques and values found in advertisements for consumer products and applied them to their candidates. Have students write an essay (a) discussing the similarities and differences between political and consumer advertisements and (b) speculating on the effects of the use of consumer advertising techniques for political purposes.

5. Students can debate the resolution: "True democracy is impossible in situations where the party with the most money can buy more and better quality advertising that can be shown more often than that of its rivals."

6. Advocacy advertisements are those in which a company, an organization, or an industry (e.g., Petro-Canada) advocates a particular public policy or political program, rather than selling a product. Ask students where advocacy advertisements are typically found. Have them collect examples of such advertisements and discuss their techniques and implications.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. a) Have students read the "Canadian Code of Advertising Standards" on pages 177-78 and then respond to the following: The advertising industry claims that it can police itself. To what extent does it do so?

   b) Have students find some advertisements that they believe are contrary to the code.

   c) Ask students to find an advertisement that deserves praise for being particularly tasteful, effective, and appealing and write a letter praising it.

   d) Ask students to write a letter criticizing an advertisement that they feel is misleading or that contravenes one of the statements in the advertising code. Depending on the circumstances or content, letters can be sent to: (i) the exhibitor of the advertisement, (ii) the public-relations department of the parent firm, (iii) Media Watch (if sex-role stereotypes are the problem), (iv) the Advertising Standards Council, or (v) Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada (see "Institutional Resources" on p. 225). Students should discuss with the class the replies to their letters when they arrive.

2. "Possessory credits" are a form of advertising that occurs within films or regular television programming when a product, such as a car or a soft drink, appears in a shot. It is a particularly effective form of advertising because it is not perceived as such and because the material in which it is inserted appears to be realistic and lifelike. Have students find examples of possessory credits in films and television programs that they watch. Then have them examine a popular sitcom and find places where products could be easily inserted. Discuss with students the impact and the ethics of this practice.

3. *Narrowcasting* is a term used to describe the increasingly common practice among media producers of aiming their products not at a mass audience, but rather at smaller but better-defined target audiences, for which advertisers will pay a higher price. Many radio stations, for example, now broadcast only one type of music or concentrate on news or business reporting as a means of delivering specialized audiences to their advertisers. Have students trace the development of narrowcasting in radio, compare it to trends in the magazine and television industries, and relate it to the economics of the advertising industry.

4. New York adman Tony Schwartz coined the term *partipulation* to describe techniques that get consumers to participate in their own manipulation. Have students collect and examine a number of popular advertising jingles and attempt to determine what makes a jingle successful and to what extent jingles are a form of "partipulation". Students may examine other advertisements to find other forms of partipulation.

5. A fast-paced commercial may contain more than forty shots in thirty seconds. Some critics have claimed that when we return to the slower editing of regular programming, or to the natural rhythm of our own lives, we often find the pace unaccountably dull. (Critics of *Sesame Street,* the influential children's educational television program, claim that it is just a series of short, fast-paced segments that have borrowed the techniques of advertising to capture young people's attention.) Have students discuss the effect of speed in television commercials on our perception of other programming and on our lives in general.

6. Many people have noted the increasing similarity between television commercials and rock videos. Ask students to find examples of rock-video techniques in commercials and to comment on the effectiveness of these techniques.

7. Students can do research or write essays on topics such as the following:

   - Magazine advertisements as a reflection of popular culture. Students can examine the advertisements of the past (e.g., those in *Maclean's* and *Saturday Night* magazines from the 1950s and 1960s). What do they tell us about the concerns and values of the times?
   - The role of advertising. Does it follow or create trends? Does it create needs or cater to our wants and desires?
   - The aesthetics and craft in award-winning advertisements and commercials
   - The appeal that advertising makes to the human desire for one or more of the following: wealth, status, self-esteem, adventure, sex appeal, power, youthfulness
   - The role of magazines. Students should discuss the following statements: The primary economic function of magazines is to group readers into target audiences for advertisers. Their primary social function, however, is even more complex: magazines serve to establish and maintain key constructs of reality, and their most important functions are ideological.
   - The effective use of humour in advertisements
   - The ways in which advertising can be seen as a reflection of the ideological basis of our society. Is it, as some claim, intimately bound up with patriarchy, capitalism, and consumerism?
   - How one or more of the following are depicted in advertisements: mum, dad, kids, car owners, athletes, middle-aged people, senior citizens. What constitutes happiness in advertisements? Guilt? Sin? Leisure?
   - Careers in advertising

- Language, logic, and advertising: an analysis of advertising double-speak, claims, "weasel words" (words used by advertisers that persuade an audience while at the same time modifying a product's claim of curing, guaranteeing, and so on; these words are cleverly inserted and often ignored; for example, a mouthwash "helps to prevent bad breath": the weasel word is "helps", and the mouthwash does not prevent bad breath), and "techno-babble" (words used in advertisements to impress us by their scientific or technical sound, for example, a gas that has "formula H" or "platform 8")
- Advertising and the teenage consumer (teenagers as a target market)
- Advertisements on public transit
- The value of public-service advertisements
- Billboards: larger than life
- Sexual stereotyping: "You haven't come such a long way, baby."
- Subliminal seduction: an examination of the following books by Wilson Key: *Subliminal Seduction* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973); *Media Sexploitation* (New York: Signet, 1976); *The Clam Plate Orgy* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980)
- Racial stereotyping in advertising
- A portrait of an advertising agency
- Advertising in women's, men's, and children's magazines: an analysis
- The history of advertising
- Advertising and children: What kind of restriction should there be?
- Advertisements as "mini-myths": how and why they have created our modern-day mythologies, which reflect our needs, fears, and aspirations

SEXUALITY IN THE MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

Media sexuality is one of the most important and controversial of the issues that have emerged from media studies. We have all heard concerns in the 1980s about our permissive society, the continual pushing of limits, changing community standards, and research connecting pornography with sexual aggression. Today our popular culture bombards young people with a proliferation of sexual messages.

This unit explores sexuality as a social construct, one that has been organized effectively through its presentation by the media. While some of the images of sexuality that are presented in the media have positive implications, teachers have to deal with the many stereotypes of males and females that can have a negative influence as role models on adolescents. Educators must deal not only with these stereotypes but also with the question of how violence is woven into the fabric of sexual representation in the media. Finally, there is a need to explore alternative representations of sexuality in which sex is seen as part of caring and consensual human relationships. Pursuing these issues in the classroom requires the judicious use of values-education and media-literacy strategies that take into account the whole spectrum of sexuality, the sensibilities of young people, and the sensitivities of the community.

THE POLITICS OF BEAUTY

Women have given up much of their potential true power to compete in the beauty game, and have gained less by it than they have been led to believe. Fairy tale, cautionary tale, romance – all lure us into the beauty-is-power paradox. We have to understand the force of the myth over all of us in order to free ourselves from it – to understand why beauty is political, and why women must learn the pitfalls of that form of political exchange.

Robin Tolmac and Raquel Scherr, *Face Value: The Politics of Beauty* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984)

1. a) What is seen as beautiful often depends on who is looking and what the fashion of the day is. To explore this notion, have students examine a series of images of female beauty that span the globe's cultures and different time periods. Ideally, these can be shown as slides, although pictures from books and magazines can also be used. A Reubens painting, a photograph of a Barbie doll, and an African woman in full celebratory costume are examples of female beauty that are appropriate for this activity. Ask students what we learn about the nature of fashion and beauty from images such as these. Note that *Femininity* by Susan Brownmiller (New York: Ballantine, 1984) draws on the many manifestations of femininity throughout the ages and is an ideal resource for this activity.

   b) A similar exploration can be pursued using images of men such as the following: a photograph of Michelangelo's *David,* an image of a seventeenth-century Frenchman in full wig and makeup, a Hulk Hogan doll, a Native Canadian chief in full dress. Students should discuss whether the male standard of beauty depends on fashion as well.

   c) Discuss the issue of fashion with students, using questions such as the following: Who decides fashion? How does fashion reflect the different amounts of power wielded by men and by women in our society? What do men stand to gain by conformity with fashion? What do women stand to gain?

2. Have students examine advertisements in two mainstream magazines, one targeted to a female audience (e.g., *Chatelaine*) and another targeted to a male audience (e.g., *Sports Illustrated*). In small groups, students then brainstorm a list of words that describe the women and men in the advertisements. It is important that students not censor their responses, since one of the purposes of this exercise is to reveal the immediate emotional responses evoked by such images. Have students compare the lists of words applied to women and to men to determine to what extent patterns emerge. (How representative of our society are these images? How has sexual stereotyping been used?)

3. Many products are promoted as being able to "make over" or transform the individual. Have students collect advertising slogans that emphasize the power of a product to "transform".

4. Students can observe the ways in which the media construct male and female beauty by closely examining photographs of a male model and a female model and then completing a table like the following for each:

Part Changed	Effects	Products Used	Techniques Used (e.g., air brushing)
hair	fine lustre	hair spray	Photographic lighting gives hair its sheen and appearance of vitality.

Students should note all of the elements that have been used to alter the models' "natural" forms. They can then list, in the first column of the table, all of the parts of the body that have been changed from the hair down to the toes, trying not to leave anything out (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth, skin, nails). They can then complete the rest of the table. When they have finished, they can consider the following questions: What do we learn from these constructions of beauty? How do they relate to consumer values? How do the tables for men and women compare?

5. In addition to the white, young, able-bodied form, the female body type most socially valued today is the trim, slender line. Even our consumer products display this desired form, since the cult of the thin has invaded every facet of the culture. It is preached not only by commodities, but also by celebrity images, fashion models, and rituals such as beauty contests. It is also acted out for us by "weight saints" such as Jane Fonda and Richard Simmons. Have students collect advertisements for women's clothing, soft drinks, automobiles, and bath soap. Ask them to identify and discuss the significance of the stereotypes that emerge from the types of models used to sell these products. They should also consider how the predominance of such stereotypes can affect women's self-image.

6. It is important to discuss with adolescent girls, who understandably derive pleasure from hairstyles, clothes, and makeup, their personal experience of the "beauty as power" phenomenon as reflected in the mass media. Students should see the desire to decorate themselves as a positive human characteristic, but one that leaves them extremely vulnerable in a society where human desires are manipulated for the profit motive.

   a) Ask students to discuss the issues raised by the use of adolescents as a target audience that can easily be exploited.

   b) Students could research female stars – from Marilyn Monroe to Tina Turner – to compare how different individuals have handled their sexual images.

EROTICIZATION OF BEAUTY

1. Because of the trend in the media towards eroticizing both men and women, it is important that students know how to decode these representations. This exercise explores the ways in which the media make women and men appear erotic. The object of the activity is to have students consider the sources and effects of the erotic power of specific images.

   a) To begin, ask students to look for erotic images in screen or fashion magazines, or screen the short film *Killing Us Softly* (National Film Board, 1979; 16 mm, colour, 28 min), a lecture by Jean Kilbourne (only suitable for a Senior secondary school class). Use the following questions as a guide for the examination of the images: Are the subject's eyes directed towards the spectator? Is the mouth open? Is the head cocked to the side? If there are both men and women in the images, how are they positioned in relation to each other?

   b) York University sociologist Judith Posner describes objectification as the "object-like character of an image that connotes passivity, vulnerability, property, and, in its most extreme form, victimization" (*Atkinson Review of Canadian Studies* I: 1 [Spring 1984], p. 17). Posner suggests that most of the time women are presented as objects. Objectification is a step in making violence more acceptable; in effect, the victim is a thing, not a real person. Have the class examine eroticized images of women in terms of the following questions: Are any of the qualities of objectification apparent in the image? How are these qualities conveyed? Compare the picture with a straightforward image that has no sexual overtones. What are the differences?

   c) While noting that women are objectified more often than men, Posner also notes an increase in images that objectify men. Students can examine these kinds of images in both men's and women's magazines and determine whether there are any differences between the objectified images of women and men.

2. Often, an attempt to reproduce a magazine model's poses results in a gentle but effective parody of them. As a drama exercise, ask students to try to act out various artificial poses (e.g., lips parted) that they have noticed in media representations. Then ask them to reverse the sex roles, with the boys attempting to act out the female poses and the girls acting out the men's poses. Have students discuss what they learn from creating these positions.

ARCHETYPES

1. Throughout history, sexual archetypes have had an important influence on our perceptions of women and men. Women have tended to be categorized and mythologized as nurturing mothers, as innocent virgins, or as independent, sensual women. All three of these archetypes have been limiting and have worked to control women's roles. This exercise is intended to uncover the relevance of the specifically sexual archetypes of virgin and sensual woman and the reasons for the dichotomy of the image of women in our culture. Ask students to compile a list of their favourite female television, pop, and film stars and to categorize them according to their appropriate designation. Are there any media stars that cannot be slotted so easily? Do they vacillate between virgin and sensual woman or do they have qualities that make them impossible to categorize? Are any of them androgynous?

   You might like to have students read and discuss *Goddesses in Every Woman: A New Psychology of Women* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985) by Jean Bolen. This excellent resource book explores the variety of female roles implied by the seven archetypal goddesses (Artemis, Athena, Hestia, Hera, Demeter, Persephone, and Aphrodite) and describes a rich variety of behaviour patterns and personality traits.

2. Ask students to identify similar archetypes for men (e.g., superhero, wimp, and the nerd) and have them try an exercise similar to activity 1, using a list of famous men.

3. Evidence of the growing numbers of women in the work force can be detected through media images. Encourage students to look for advertisements that attempt to sell items such as cars and insurance to a female audience and to examine the use of language in them.

4. Ask students to think about one of the television mothers that they have watched and write a description of her appearance and the work that she does inside or outside the home. Students can then compare their own mothers with the television mother. This exercise works with a similar investigation of television fathers.

SEX ROLES

1. The sexual messages of popular culture play a significant role in reinforcing sex-role stereotypes. Divide the class into two groups based on sex and ask students to discuss toys that are currently popular or that they recall using. When the class reconvenes, each group presents its views, and the whole class then discusses the implications of its choices.

2. Popular culture representations of males and females often reveal a very limited range. Males, for example, are sometimes portrayed as muscular and unemotional. What do these images suggest about the definition of masculinity in popular culture?

3. To have students deconstruct advertisements that contain sex-role messages is an effective way to focus on the many important and subtle aspects of media representations. Have students develop a useful checklist of such messages by asking them questions such as the following about specific advertisements: What are the women doing? What are the men doing? Who is in the foreground? In the background? How is the device of juxtaposition used to convey meaning? Are the women or men placed beside objects that send out specific messages? (For example, is a man's hand placed on a woman in a way that conveys a particular message?) Who is active? Who is not? Who looks fashionable?

   Ask students to identify the patterns in the images of males and females that emerge from these decodings. Then have them scan the media to try to find advertisements that break these patterns. They should determine how they break the pattern and to what effect. (Note that *Gender Advertisements* [Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1979] by Erving Goffman contains useful material on decoding the body language and conventional positioning of men and women in advertisements.)

4. Critics have argued that male voice-overs in a commercial in which women are conversing or thinking out loud reduce the importance of the women in the commercial. Discuss this idea with the class.

5. The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) *Report on Self-Regulation by the Broadcasting and Advertising Industries for the Elimination of Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Broadcast Media* (Ottawa: CRTC Information Services, 1986) contains some useful guidelines for broadcasters with regard to the image of women presented on broadcast media. Have students monitor the media to determine the extent to which broadcasters and advertisers have followed the suggested guidelines.

6. a) Rock videos condense and dramatize sexuality in a powerful way. In addition to the questions posed in activity 3, ask students to consider the following questions related to the ways in which men and women are coded sexually: Who is playing the instruments? Is there any fragmentation of the bodies (the tendency of advertisers and some fashion photographers to show only a part of the body, such as the legs, and thereby reduce people to a body part or fragment)?

   b) Commentators have noticed that women tend to be presented as one or more of the following: cold-looking women, victims, props, or sex objects. Ask students to determine how extensive these stereotypes are in rock videos.

   c) Fortunately, there are many rock videos that do not have sexist messages. Ask students to note those videos in which women are not stereotyped in the above ways and to show how the women in these videos break out of their sexist roles.

7. a) Have students come up with media images of teens by discussing a spectrum of teen movies, ranging from those featuring leering sexual exploitation (e.g., *Porky's*) to those that provide a sensitive treatment of troubled teens exploring their sexual identity.

   b) Some teens argue that the exploitative films are merely harmless commercialized sexual fantasies and do not deserve to be taken seriously. Have students debate this view.

8. One survey of teenagers indicated that television viewing taught them specific things about sex, such as "Sex is secretive and dangerous," "Nice girls don't," "Real men score," and "Real men's sexual feelings are so strong that they are uncontrollable." Have students discuss these views, along with their own impressions of what prime-time television tells them about sexuality.

9. Harlequin romances represent one of the most successful publishing ventures of the century. Have students examine the phenomenon, discussing what they think is the basis of their appeal. They should pay careful attention to the way sex roles are conveyed and sexuality is presented. A good resource on romances is Margaret Ann Jensen, *Love's Sweet Return* (Toronto: The Women's Educational Press, 1984).

10. As a research project, ask students to investigate the role of Media Watch, a Vancouver-based group that monitors the media closely for sexist representations (see the section entitled "Institutional Resources"). Students could do their own media-watch survey by assigning individual students to several different media for a week.

DEALING WITH THE PORNOGRAPHY ISSUE

Pornography is an issue that has galvanized the community and government. Although it has been assumed that the vast majority of pornography's consumers are adults, York University researcher James Check has revealed that "more than a third of Canadian youth regularly consumed pornographic videos and . . . there is a strong acceptance of rape myths and violence against women" (*Toronto Star*, March 11, 1986). Thus, this section of the unit on sexuality has a special relevance.

Because there is never a consensus in defining pornography or on the distinction between the erotic and the pornographic, it may be more profitable to focus on the prevalence of certain kinds of images in pornography – the ones that convey an imbalance of power, the presence of coercion, or the absence of consent. A good resource in this area is Laura Lederer, ed., *Take Back the Night* (New York: Bantam, 1980).

While pornography cannot be shown in the classroom, the power relationships and poses, as well as the value systems of pornography, do pervade the mainstream media and can, therefore, be explored by looking at mainstream media texts. The following exercise addresses these values.

On one side of the page is a list of values and on the other are examples of the "mainstreaming" of that value (an idea or image that at one time was marginal or subcultural but that currently pervades the dominant mass media, such as prime-time television). Students can provide their own examples of mainstreaming after a discussion of how women and men are presented in pornography.

Value	**Mainstreaming of Value**
– Innocence may be the last frontier (the sexy virgin).	The "pretty baby syndrome", the youth focus of advertisements. Look for advertisements of children's clothing to see if they are sexualized.
– Pain may be pleasurable.	The scene in *Gone With the Wind* with Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara on the staircase. Look for advertisements that imply violence.
– If women could choose, they would sell sex whenever they could.	This is the meaning behind many advertising pitches (e.g., buy the car and the smiling woman comes with it).
– When men dominate, the result is both natural and sexy, and women enjoy being dominated in this way.	The macho male; most heavy metal; videos.
– Women are sexual objects to be looked at and played with.	The image of women in men's magazines and on television exercise shows.

For more information on the topic of pornography, including workshops for teachers and for Senior secondary school students, consult *Resources Against Pornography* (RAP), P.O. Box 695, Postal Station C, Toronto, Ontario M6J 3S1.

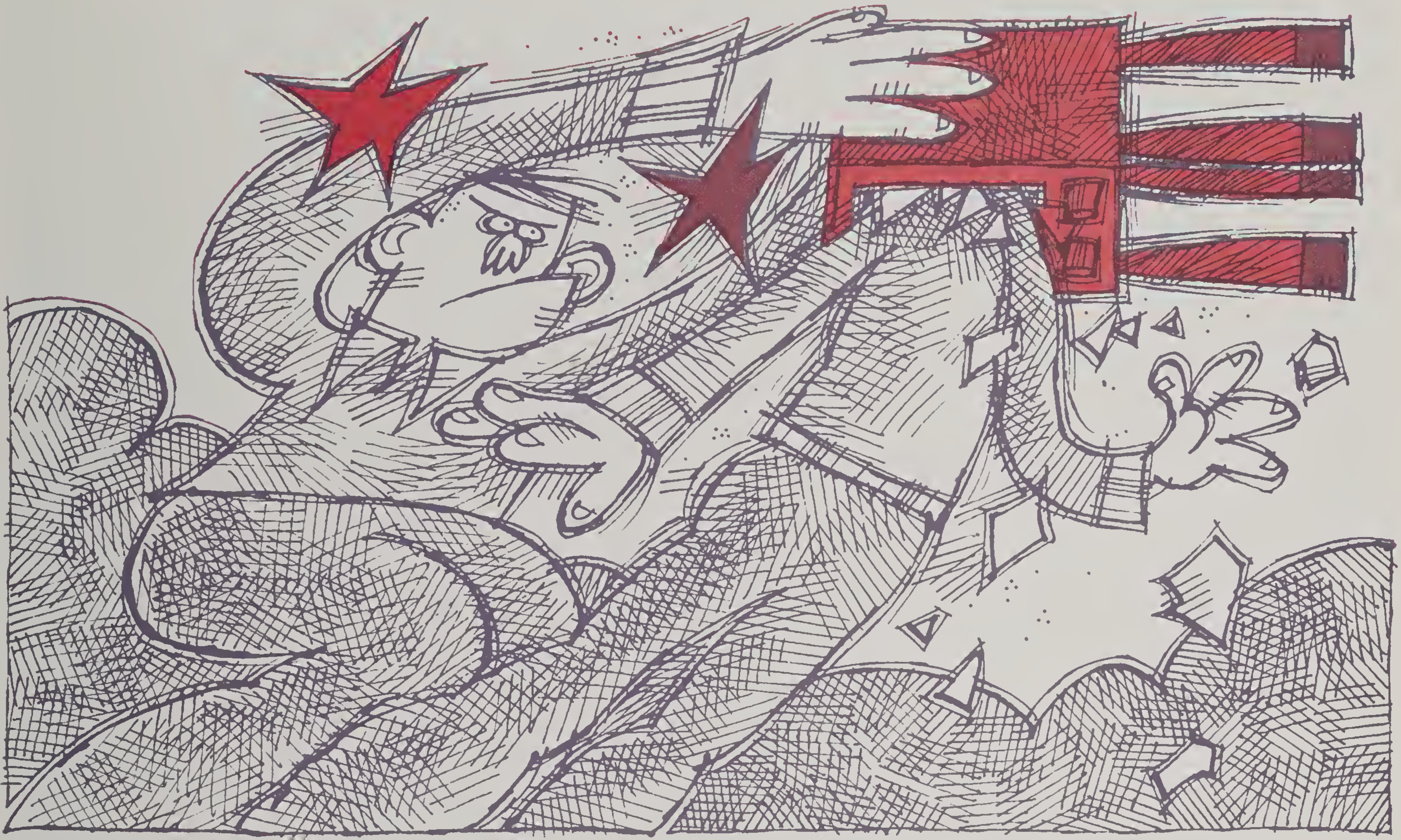
ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. The methods of representation used by the media sometimes result in a double message that mystifies the real meaning of the text. For example, rock singer Madonna twisted the representation of the virgin archetype and turned it into something overtly sexual. Have students look for other examples of double messages in the media.
2. Dr. Ruth Westheimer is just one of a host of media sexual gurus who present their views on appropriate sexual behaviour. Students can discuss the role that media sexual gurus play in presenting sexuality as a social construct.
3. A survey of media representations of sexuality over the past two decades points to the phenomenon of continually "pushing the limits". Have students examine men's and women's magazines, beginning with those of the early 1970s, to see whether they reflect changing attitudes towards sexuality.
4. As part of his promotion of the *Playboy* philosophy, Hugh Hefner promised sexual liberation to both men and women. Ask students to debate whether men and women have been liberated by the Hefner version of sexuality.
5. a) Have students look for media representations that critique the social construct of sexuality or that present sexuality that is caring and consensual. For example, Canadian writers such as Margaret Laurence, Margaret Atwood, and Alice Munro present women in mutual relationships with men.

   b) Encourage students to find lyrics in rock music that oppose sexist roles.

   c) Have students seek out and discuss films that present alternatives to the dominant media images of sexuality.
6. Ask students to cite some examples from literature, from films, and from television in which men and women are shown as having both strengths and frailties.

VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIA



INTRODUCTION

Television researcher George Gerbner once remarked that violence is not an inner impulse gone out of control; violence is a cultural style. This unit explores the ways in which the media have helped to develop the dimensions of this culture of violence in everything from cartoons to avenger films. The effects of violence in the mass media reach consumers of all ages. While the data on media violence and its actual effects on consumers are still being interpreted, the way in which the media represent violence for mass consumption remains a crucial topic for discussion with young people. Students with media-literacy skills can begin to uncover the way in which the mass media make violence appealing, often linking it with power and pleasure in a way that makes it seem natural. Through this exploration, students are encouraged to raise questions about the culture of violence. In this regard, they need to question those representations in which conflict is resolved primarily by means of violence.

The following activities should be seen as a sequence of steps that address students' existing knowledge, prejudices, and concerns.

DEFINITIONS AND TECHNIQUES

1. Media researcher George Gerbner defines violence as the "overt expression of physical force, with or without a weapon, against self or other, compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing" (from "Television and Violence" by Larry Gross in Ben Logan, ed., *Television Awareness Training* [New York: Media Action Research Center, 1979]). Ask students to discuss how this definition relates to television.

2. Some commentators claim that violence has been institutionalized in forms that make the violence seem acceptable. They point out that violence is prevalent in our prisons as well as in many of our national pastimes, such as organized sports. Discuss with students whether their attitudes towards this kind of institutionalized violence are different from their attitudes towards other kinds of violence.

3. Many observers have remarked that violence on television and in movies is trivialized or toned down and that it is made to look glamorous with a minimum of pain attached as, for example, in the film *Clockwork Orange*. Explore this idea with the class by finding out first if they have witnessed or participated in any real-life violence. Discuss how successful the use of violence was in solving that conflict and ask students to compare their experiences with the ways in which violence is presented in movies or on television.

4. Have students deconstruct a typical television fight, analysing the process used to make the violence appealing and exciting. For example, how has music been used? Slow motion? Cutaways that make the assaults seem less intense? Sound effects (e.g., cars exploding)? What elements tend to be missing from the television representation? Have the results of the violence been portrayed realistically? (For example, do we ever see the victims who may be still suffering at some later time?)

5. Prime-time television fights have become so predictable that the violence has become almost clichéd. Have students construct a storyboard for a fight scene based on the techniques listed in activity 4. (Drama students could choreograph a fight scene in slow motion.)

6. Have students count the number of violent scenes in a cartoon and discuss the ways in which cartoons present violence. Using careful Socratic questioning, ask students how they respond to the violence. Do they find it funny, frightening, or sad? To what extent is this type of violence addictive? How are the jolts per minute used (see pp. 4 and 45)? Students might interview young children about their feelings regarding cartoon violence, using the inquiry model to ensure that they raise key questions about this phenomenon.

THE CULTURE OF VIOLENCE

1. Pierre Berton reminds us that the Canadian tradition of law and order is distinct from the frontier justice in the American tradition. Describing the American tradition, Black activist H. Rapp Brown once commented that "violence is as American as cherry pie". Still other commentators have remarked on the rugged individualism of Americans versus the apparent Canadian willingness to submit to authority. Do Canadians have a different mental outlook than Americans? To pursue this inquiry, students can examine literature and media texts from both countries and search for statistics on real crime as well.

2. Violence appears in art as well as in the mass media. For example, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* contains many scenes that are bloody and violent. But violence does not appear in media and in art for the same reasons or with the same effect. In order to investigate this, students can discuss a spectrum of different media texts that contain violence, beginning with a cartoon (e.g., *Roadrunner*) and then moving to an attempt to portray real violence (e.g., *Apocalypse Now*) and to "slasher" films (e.g., *Friday the 13th*). After they have given their emotional response to each, discuss with students which films have an acceptable context for the representation of violence and ask them which films are unacceptable or contain gratuitous violence.

3. Ask students to investigate the research data on the effects of television violence on viewers. Advise them that there will be conflicting results in this controversial area and urge them to find the most recent data.

4. Many Canadians feel that excessive violence in hockey is a serious problem for children involved in hockey leagues, especially because of the vulnerability of the young to adult role models. Have students discuss this topic. Ask them what changes could be made in hockey coverage on television to reflect such a point of view (e.g., in the use of language by sports commentators, the replaying of key scenes).

5. Violence is often presented in contexts that make it seem more acceptable. For example, when violence is presented in conjunction with patriotism, law and order, crime, and the actions of vigilantes, we are seduced into rationalizing its use. To investigate this media strategy, have students view films that make use of the above contexts and then answer questions such as the following: How is the enemy described (e.g., consider the stereotyping of Germans as diabolical Nazis or of Russians as evil, boorish, and unfeeling)? How do we feel about the enemy's victimization in these movies? What is the effect of continually seeing Russians, Japanese, or Germans as the "bad guys"? If we see Russians as basically evil or subhuman, how might this portrayal influence our response to the coverage of the arms race or to summit conferences?

6. Sexuality is presented in a context of violence so effectively that American researcher Ed Donnerstein once referred to the combination as a time bomb. How this sexual violence is perceived often depends on whose point of view is presented. For example, when an assault against a woman is presented from her point of view, the viewer sees her terror, but often, when the assault is seen from the attacker's point of view, the emphasis is on lust. Have students find examples of these conflicting tendencies and explore the way in which point of view is used to condition audience response.

7. Have students view a number of rock videos (e.g., heavy-metal videos) in which there is a substantial amount of violence, keeping track of who performs the violence, who the victims are, and through whose eyes we see the violence. Then ask them to set up a chart that records the sex, race, and age of both the victims and the victimizers. What is the significance of the patterns that emerge?

8. Have students discuss why there are so many police and crime dramas on television. What is their appeal? Are they realistic? As part of a research project, encourage students to talk to their local police officers.

9. Observers of fashion magazines have coined the phrase "violence chic" to describe situations in which models are shown in chains, often with blood-stained carpets as backdrops. When defending a store-window display containing these images, one store spokesman said that he was simply being fashionable. Have students study fashion magazines to see whether they can find examples of "violence chic". Ask them to what extent this technique is a convenient way for the media to legitimize violence and thereby desensitize us to its effects.

10. Media researchers have found that prolonged exposure to television makes the world seem like an unsafe place. This exercise is meant to identify the role that news reporting plays in this process. Have students analyse the language used in a radio or television newscast, listing all the words that directly or indirectly load the dice towards a perception of the world as a place that is dominated by violence (e.g., assault, threat). Then have them analyse the language of advertisements to see if it too reflects this tendency (e.g., "Brand X fights bad breath").

CANADIAN IDENTITY AND OWNERSHIP

The debate concerning the foreign influence on Canadian media raises the issue of the ability of Canadians to articulate who they really are. Since the bulk of what Canadians watch, listen to, and read is foreign, the importance of the issue is clear. The issue of foreign influence may not be unique to Canada, but given our proximity to the United States – 90 per cent of Canadians live within 300 km of the American border – Canadians are the number one recipients of American viewpoints. The question of how many of these viewpoints Canadians accept as their own is an important aspect of media studies. Through a comparative study of media texts – Canadian, American, and, if available, samples from other countries – students can be motivated to evaluate the Canadian sense of identity.

In addition to the following activities, material on the role of the CBC in the issue of cultural identity may be found on pages 108-9 in the section on radio.

1. Have students peruse the television guide to find an American-made drama, soap opera, or sitcom and a Canadian counterpart. They should then compare the programs in terms of questions such as the following: What political or topical references are made to presidents or prime ministers? What visible minorities are present? What difference is there in the pace of the two shows? What other production values differ? What kinds of situations emerge in the plot? Are there any other comparisons that can be made? Have students summarize their findings.

2. Have students compare *Time* magazine with *Maclean's*, paying attention to format, layout, content, stories, and images of nationalistic concern.

3. a) Ask students to search for examples of Canadianism in media images and then answer the following questions: How are Canadians portrayed and reacted to by others? How do Hollywood representations of Canada compare to Canadian ones? Are there any stereotypes of Canadians that consistently appear?

   b) In the spirit of the "SCTV" parody featuring the Mackenzie brothers, have students devise their own parody of Canadians, based on the images they have uncovered.

4. The long-running CBC television adventure series "The Beachcombers" is seen in over thirty-five countries and has become a Canadian institution. Set on the British Columbia coast with its backdrop of mountains, it shows a simple life, and its characters, in their lumberjack shirts, are clear-cut and non-violent. People from other countries have described it as being typically Canadian; its critics have described its setting and plots as pure Canadian fantasy. Ask students why they think the show has been such a success. Referring to the information on pages 33-41, to what extent is it a construction of reality?

5. The mandate of the National Film Board is "to show Canadians to Canadians". Peruse a current National Film Board catalogue and borrow a cross section of films with strong Canadian content representing several decades. Have students assess the effectiveness of the NFB in conveying Canadian identity and issues of concern to Canadians.

6. Canadian films tend to present a low-key treatment of their subjects – often in a documentary style – as survivors rather than as victors. Show several Canadian films and ask students to discuss how much they "represent us". The following are some suggested titles: *Who Has Seen the Wind?, Don't Shoot the Teacher, Goin' Down the Road, The Rowdy Man, Mon Oncle Antoine, The Grey Fox, My American Cousin.*

7. Discuss with students the extent to which Canadian media reflect the different ethnic identities and concerns in Canada's multicultural society. Then have students monitor, over several weeks, a variety of media to determine what images emerge.

8. Use the following quotation as the basis of a discussion of the issue of Canadian identity both in films and on television:

If we are Nationalists and believe in ourselves as Canadians, the American product really is the enemy – both in the cinemas and on television: not because it is bad in itself (which it obviously isn't) but because by monopolizing our screens it has colonized our imaginations, offering its product as if it were our own. Without ever being aware of it, we have been so conditioned to respond to the kinaesthetic excitements of fast-moving action, to the glamour of stars, and to the over-riding mythology of power, of big money, of the glamorous life, that when we don't find those qualities in our own films, we tend to think of them as inferior.

Peter Harcourt, *Movies and Mythologies* (Toronto: CBC Publications, 1977), page 165

9. Have students identify five Canadian pop stars and assess whether they have qualities that are not evident in their American counterparts. Ask them to what extent we can call these qualities Canadian. Are Canadian-made music videos different from their American counterparts?

10. Canadian publishers lobbied strongly for a law that would effectively prevent American publishers from distributing Canadian versions of *Time* magazine and *Reader's Digest*. As a research project, have students research the debate that took place and the law that finally emerged.

11. The Canadian government has taken specific steps to increase the number of Canadian-made feature films. Have students find out what steps have been taken. Try screening some of the films that have been made in Canada under the policies established in the mid-1970s. Critics complain that these government policies have not resulted in films that reflect Canadian identity but have created a "Hollywood North" instead. Have students discuss the issues. Seth Feldman, ed., *Take Two* (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1984) and back issues of the film periodical *Cinema Canada* are good resources for this activity.

REPORTING THE NEWS

PRINT

> Many journalists argue with deep and honourable conviction that their job is to report in a value-free and non-judgemental way, and that they will be impaired from doing this if they are seen to be committed to a position. . . . [But] no journalism is ever free of value judgements or bias.
>
> Patrick Watson, commentator and media analyst

The following activities are intended to help students explore some of the issues in reporting the news as well as some of the ways in which the different print media deal with the news.

1. After a class outing or an assembly, have students write news reports on what they experienced. Ask them to consider the results, as they are read out to the class, in terms of the following questions: Are the facts accurate? How does each reporter arrange the truth a little differently? Where do the reporter's judgements or biases become evident?

2. Have students define *fact* and *opinion*. Then have them read an issue of a newspaper or a magazine and locate articles of "objective" reporting and articles of opinion. Have students count the number of "pure facts" in one article of each kind. Have them note the writer's choice of words in each type of article and make a list of words that seem to be "value-loaded" (e.g., strong adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and slang expressions), examine the way in which details are arranged and emphasized, and note the placement of the photographs, captions, illustrations, and advertisements that accompany the reports. Then ask students to answer the following questions:
   a) What are the similarities and differences in the two types of article – the straight news report and the item of comment or opinion?
   b) Sometimes newspapers and magazines place the word *advertisement* over certain advertisements. Why do they do this only occasionally for some advertisements? Is the same thing done for the reader when it comes to distinguishing "news" from "analysis" or "opinion"?
   c) What would happen to the newspaper if it could report only facts? If it could report only opinions? If it had to make the editorial page its front page?

3. Provide brief "sight" texts from newspapers and magazines and ask students to note whether the choice of words used in them implies a position – negative, positive, or neutral. For example, they could consider the word choices in the following headlines:

Thatcher besieged as tales of intrigue follow report of rift

PM stung by cabinet response

Ontario sets a standard for English exams

Or they might consider the word choice and syntax in the following "lead" from a newspaper's special report on a youth suspected of murder:

> He was obsessed with the violent movie *First Blood.* He had a fantasy about guns and an access to an arsenal. He joined the militia but was thrown out for missing parades.

4. Have students gather print texts that they think contain examples of propaganda or bias. They must define their terms and be prepared to explain their choice of texts by referring to specific examples of word choice, syntax, allusions, figurative language, and so on. For other activities related to bias and propaganda, consult Eleanor MacLean, *Between the Lines: How to Detect Bias and Propaganda in the News and Everyday Life* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1981).

THE NEW JOURNALISM

Although it is possible to see the "new journalism" (see p. 152) as a creation of the sixties, it marked an important change in news reporting, which is more pervasive today than it was when journalist Tom Wolfe covered a routine customized-car exhibition and wrote "The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby". The stodginess of the news reporting of the 1950s was out. Truth was relative. Wolfe wrote his report in an exciting new style in which the reporter's subjectivity and imagination were given full rein:

> Ten o'clock Sunday morning in the hills of North Carolina. Cars, miles of cars, in every direction, millions of cars, pastel cars, aqua green, aqua blue, aqua beige, aqua buff, aqua dawn, aqua dusk, aqua Malacca lacquer, Cloud lavender, Assassin pink, Rake-a-cheek raspberry, Nude Strand coral, Honest Thrill Orange, and Baby Fawn Lust cream-coloured cars are all going to the stock car races, and that old mothering North Carolina sun keeps exploding off the windshields.
>
> Tom Wolfe, *Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965), page 67

Today's students are still attracted to news reporting that is lively and entertaining. However, students should also be aware of the pitfalls inherent in covering the news while borrowing the techniques of the novelist or the poet. Some media analysts have demonstrated that, more and more, the "news" is artistic fiction – sometimes clever and interesting, but still more fiction than fact.

1. a) Have students study a newspaper or magazine report on a topic with which they are familiar. *Rolling Stone* magazine, for example, usually contains a report on rock music written in the new journalism style. First, ask students to find examples of the author's factual and "objective" reporting. Next, ask them to select examples that indicate the reporter's personality and style. The following are some possible areas to be considered:

   - the writer's use of the first-person singular
   - the arrangement and selection of material
   - the word choice (e.g., slang, jargon, colourful language, imagery)
   - an emphasis on details that render atmosphere, characterization, and other aspects of writing borrowed from fiction
   - the use of photographs, illustrations, and captions
   - the use of sources

   b) Ask students to write their own "new journalism" report on a musician or a rock concert of their choice. To what extent were they able to be objective and purely factual? Ask them to discuss some of the details of their "factual" report that reflect subjectivity.

2. Have students view the first ten minutes of one day's news report on two television channels. The first news report could be from a United States channel. The second should be from the CBC. Ask them to compare the two reports and examine how each of the following areas conditions the viewers' response to the information received:

   - the number and length of the news items
   - the "focus" of the news selected. Some analysts claim that news presentations on United States channels are more entertaining than those on Canadian channels. Have students examine the elements of speed (or jolts per minute), content (e.g., sex and violence), and the general commercial appeal in each report.
   - the structure of the news: the order and juxtaposition of each item, including advertisements
   - the style of the news: the personalities of anchorpersons and reporters; their choice of words; the use of visuals, music, and special effects

COMPARING TELEVISION AND PRINT

1. Some people like to receive the news from television, while others prefer print. Some even believe that one medium is more credible than the other. Ask students to outline the advantages and disadvantages of receiving news from one medium only.

2. Have students study one important news item as it is conveyed by (a) a major daily newspaper, (b) a news magazine, and (c) television. You may wish to prepare a worksheet for students. It should require them to consider some of the following aspects of the item:
   - the length of the report in viewing or reading time
   - the content of the report: selection and arrangement. How does the juxtaposition of items in the news affect our perception of them? How does the placement of advertisements in both media affect the content of the news?
   - the ratio of fact to opinion. For example, how many statistics and how many judgemental words are there in each report?
   - the various "appeals" of each. How does the particular nature of each medium influence the way in which the news is transmitted and perceived? Do the visuals of television and its use of an anchorperson carry more authority or encourage more trust than the techniques of newspapers or magazines?
   - the effect of advertising in each medium. Can advertisers affect the news in any way in either medium?

TERRORISM AND THE MEDIA

One fascinating and important media issue involves the use that terrorists make of the various media. At such times the "public's right to know" comes up against the terrorist's exploitation of the media to gain a free platform and free advertising. This issue was examined in a conference on international terrorism, held in Washington, D.C., in June 1984. The proceedings of this conference were printed in the October 1984 issue of *Harper's* ("Lost in the Terrorist Theater: A Harper's Forum"). The moderator, ABC News anchorman Ted Koppel, expressed this issue in a provocative way that is useful for class discussion:

> Let me put forward the proposition that the media, particularly television, and terrorist need one another, that they have what is fundamentally a symbiotic relationship. Without television, terrorism becomes rather like the philosopher's hypothetical tree falling in the forest: no one hears it fall and therefore it has no reason for being. And television without terrorism, while not deprived of all interesting things in the world, is nonetheless deprived of one of the most interesting.
>
> "Lost in the Terrorist Theater: A Harper's Forum", *Harper's* magazine, October 1984, page 47

1. Begin the discussion of this issue by asking students to define *terrorism.* How is terrorism different from any other combat? How does it compare with war, "freedom fighting", and assassination? Is terrorism a twentieth-century invention? To what extent is this pervasive word a media term? Ask students to investigate the different uses of this word.

2. Have students study the next event of terrorism reported in the media. Ask them to compare the treatment of the issue in print and on television. They might consider the following aspects as the event unfolds in the media:
   - the uses of the word *terrorism* in the media
   - the amount and type of information relayed by the media. To what extent is censorship or self-censorship evident? How much is conveyed about the terrorists, their "demands", and their specific platforms?
   - the style of reporting. What devices are used to make the event dramatic or, as Koppel says, "interesting"? (Students should note the use of photos, interviews, anchorpersons, and special audio and visual techniques.)

3. Keeping in mind the terrorist event that students have studied in the media, have them debate the following statement from the *Harper's* forum:

   > By providing the terrorist with a podium in exchange for a photo opportunity, by replacing what he does with what he says, the media become indispensable partners in terrorist productions [p. 43].

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Ask students if they have ever had any direct experience with news reports in any way. Possibly they were involved in an event that the media covered. What did they notice about the difference between their real-life experience and the way the event was constructed in the media? How was the factor of selection evident? For example, what was omitted or added? Was the event objectively and completely reported?

2. If the general public has a complaint about the reporting of the news, what can be done about it? Discuss the several options available to any citizen.

3. The Ontario Press Council handles unsatisfied reader complaints about newspaper conduct in gathering and publishing news, opinion, and advertising. In 1986 the chairman of the Ontario Press Council reported that the reader complaints about opinions expressed in the newspaper had risen significantly. This fact raises some valuable issues for students concerning the way in which the average citizen sees the role of the press.

   Discuss the extent to which the press should be responsible for its facts. Should it also be held accountable for its opinions and judgements? Ask students to write for the Ontario Press Council's guidelines for handling readers' complaints. Students may wish to comment on the way in which specific guidelines are being followed in newspaper reports that they have studied. The Ontario Press Council welcomes submissions from all readers. Its address is as follows:

   Ontario Press Council
   151 Slater Street
   Suite 708
   Ottawa, Ontario
   K1P 5H3

4. a) Have students conduct a "hot-seat" interview program, with one student playing the role of the interviewee (a politician accused of conflict of interest, for example) and the rest of the class cross-examining him or her.

   b) Ask students what useful tips they would suggest to aid "the average citizen" before a press conference or an interview on radio or television. To what extent is it possible to use the news media to one's own advantage?

5. Have students write a letter of complaint or a letter of commendation about the way one of the media handled the news. This can be a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine, to the Ontario Press Council, or to the management of a television station. Students may also wish to use a newspaper report as the basis for a letter to some other authority (e.g., the local transit system or a local politician). It is important that students document their complaints or commendations as thoroughly and as professionally as possible.

Institutional Resources

INTERNAL RESOURCES

Ontario teachers are fortunate in having a wealth of resources that can supplement those provided by their own school boards. Most boards provide a central film and video library housed in a regional media centre (sometimes called a learning resources centre or instructional materials centre). "Hands-on" production is possible in many of these facilities through audio-visual specialists (their title varies from board to board), who can also be called on to provide equipment instruction. Some boards also operate a "family of schools" system in which an audio-visual specialist works specifically for a group of schools rather than for the whole board. In some boards specific media contacts may be found in one of the schools rather than in the board office or media centre.

School librarians and board consultants can provide industry contacts and information. Professional-development committee members also know of individuals or groups who offer workshops (see also the list of organizations in "External Resources" below), while support staff and other teachers may know individuals who work directly in the media.

TVOntario (see "External Resources" below) has developed the television resource teacher (TRT) system, which provides teachers with a contact between their school or their board and TVOntario. (Information about this system is available through TVOntario.)

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Some boards have cultivated working relationships with local cable companies. It is part of the mandate of these companies to provide community access, and they welcome participation from schools. This is also true of most newspapers and radio stations. All media institutions will provide tours of their facilities, and some will send media personnel to talk to classes in the schools.

Government agencies will provide written and oral information, statistics, press releases, and other such material. In particular, the Ontario Ministry of Industry and Trade operates its Ontario Film/Video Office, which responds to public and industry inquiries. Similar bodies are the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and Telefilm Canada. The Ontario Film Institute provides an archive service and resource library for individual research and study.

The following are some of the institutional resources that provide assistance for the media classroom:

Association for Media Literacy. The Association for Media Literacy provides workshops, seminars, and conferences on media literacy and liaison with government and media institutions. As well, it publishes a regular newsletter and curriculum materials for the classroom teacher. It has played a major leadership role in increasing the media literacy of teachers at all levels of education and has become the major network for teachers of media studies in Ontario. AML has made presentations at school board professional-activity days throughout the province. Teachers can have their names added to the association's mailing list by joining the association.

Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada (AMTEC). AMTEC publishes the newsletter *Media News* and the *Canadian Journal of Educational Communication (CJEC)*. Teachers who join the association receive both publications free, but *CJEC* can be ordered separately by non-members. AMTEC also holds an annual conference in different locales across Canada.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The CBC provides *Media for Minds*, a booklet outlining all films, videos, audiotapes, transcripts, books, and study kits that are available through CBC Enterprises. All CBC material that has been cleared and is intended for public purchase is listed in this booklet.

Canadians Concerned About Violence in Entertainment (CCAVE). This organization is a citizen's group concerned about the problem of escalating violence in media representations. Members receive a regular newsletter and information on workshops and publications. CCAVE is willing to make presentations on teacher professional-activity days.

Children's Broadcast Institute. The Children's Broadcast Institute provides specific information concerning children and television and has an extensive resource library. Teachers joining the institute will receive a newsletter and other information on a regular basis. *A Children's Film and Video Directory* and the booklet *Your Child and TV* are available for a small charge.

Media Watch. This national women's organization is dedicated to improving the representations of women and girls in the media by encouraging both the elimination of sexist and pornographic images and the creation of images that reflect the changing and diverse roles of women in Canadian society.

National Film Board. Teachers can have their names added to a mailing list in order to keep abreast of National Film Board activities and screenings. Catalogues, which are periodically revised, are also available for a nominal charge. The newsletter *Education Update* keeps teachers aware of new films. Besides the regional office in Toronto and a major office in Ottawa, the NFB has district offices in Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener, London, and North Bay.

Newspapers in Education. Newspapers in Education, a program of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association, provides teachers with a discount rate on newspapers as well as study kits for specific subjects and areas of study. This material has been developed to meet ministry curriculum guidelines. Workshops are also available from the association and from many local newspapers on the "hands-on" use of newspapers in the classroom. Teachers can have their names added to the association's mailing list on request. Contact may be made through local newspapers or, if they are not members of the association, through its head office.

Ontario Film Association (OFA). The OFA sponsors seminars on Canadian film, such as the annual Grierson seminar on documentary films, and holds special film previews. It publishes *Fred*, a regular newsletter that reviews the most recent short films.

The Ontario Film Institute. An important resource for Ontario teachers, the institute contains an extensive library of information on films and television and has a collection of film recordings and feature-film videos, which are available for preview.

Ratings services. Both the BBM Bureau of Measurement and the A.C. Neilsen Company provide information to schools. BBM sends its previous year's ratings to libraries, and teachers may ask to have their names placed on a mailing list. A.C. Neilsen does not provide this service, but teachers may address specific requests to its Media Research Division.

TVOntario. TVOntario produces, acquires and distributes educational programs designed to meet specific ministry curriculum requirements. Extensive print support for teachers is available through study guides, student handbooks, and utilization units. Subject catalogues, the *School Broadcasts* magazine (published in September), and the *VIPS Catalogue* outline programs that may be freely copied "off-air" or purchased, rented, or previewed through TVOntario. Much of this material is free.

TVOntario also provides unique television-based workshops to school boards and the community. Designed to suit participants' particular needs, each workshop presents ideas for using television as an effective, interactive teaching tool. Workshop topics include Let's Play TV – Critical Television Viewing, Media Literacy, and Television and Your Children. For further information, teachers should contact TVOntario's Customer Services Department.

Other institutions. Colleges, universities, public libraries, hospitals, government ministries, and local industries that operate media departments may provide resources otherwise unavailable to teachers. Materials no longer required, such as videotape, audiotape, old film stock, and photographs, can sometimes be obtained free of charge.

Record companies, advertising agencies, media production houses, and national and local magazines can be approached for their old materials as well as for information on their artists, awards, and history. Most companies have specialized staff to handle such requests.

A number of associations and corporate groups will offer their film and video productions to schools for classroom use. Teachers will find that there is a great deal of material available, and once initial contacts have been made, it will be surprising just how quickly further networking will develop.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

A.C. Neilsen Company of Canada
160 McNabb Street
Markham, Ontario
L3R 5V7

Advertising Standards Council
350 Bloor Street East
Suite 402
Toronto, Ontario
M5W 1H5

Alliance of Canadian Cinema,
Television and Radio Artists
(ACTRA)
2239 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4S 2B5

Association for Media Literacy
40 McArthur Street
Weston, Ontario
M9P 3M7

Association for Media and
Technology in Education in
Canada (AMTEC)
500 Victoria Road
North Guelph, Ontario
N1E 6K2

BBM Bureau of Measurement
1500 Don Mills Road
Suite 300
Don Mills, Ontario
M3B 3L7

Canadian Broadcasting
Corporation (CBC)
1500 Bronson Avenue
P.O. Box 8478
Ottawa, Ontario
L8N 1H6

Canadian Daily Newspaper
Publishers Association
890 Yonge Street
Suite 1100
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 3P4

Canadian Radio-Television
and Telecommunications
Commission (CRTC)
Central Building
Promenade du Portage
Hull, Quebec
K1A 0N2

Canadians Concerned About
Violence in Entertainment
(CCAVE)
1 Duke Street
Suite 206
Hamilton, Ontario
L8P 1W9

Canadian Television Network
(CTV)
42 Charles Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M4Y 1T5

Children's Broadcast Institute
234 Eglinton Avenue East
Suite 405
Toronto, Ontario
M4P 1K5

Consumer and Corporate Affairs
Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0C9

Department of Communications
Journal Tower North Building
300 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0C8

Global Television Network
81 Barber Greene Road
Don Mills, Ontario
M3C 2A2

Media Watch
209 – 636 West Broadway
Vancouver, British Columbia
V5Z 1G2

Motion Picture Theatres
Association of Ontario
21 Dundas Square
Suite 1210
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1B7

National Film Board of Canada
Ontario Region
Mackenzie Building
1 Lombard Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1J6

National Film, Television and
Sound Archives
Public Archives of Canada
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N3

Ontario Arts Council
151 Bloor Street West
Suite 500
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 1T6

Ontario Film Association
Post Office Box 366
Station Q
Toronto, Ontario
M4T 2M5

Ontario Film Institute
Ontario Science Centre
770 Don Mills Road
Don Mills, Ontario
M3C 1T3

Ontario Film/Video Office
6th Floor, Hearst Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2

TVOntario
Box 200, Station Q
Toronto, Ontario
M4T 2T1

Bibliography

GENERAL

Canavan, Kelvin. *Mass Media Education: Curriculum Guidelines for Secondary School Year 7-12*. Sydney, Australia: Catholic Education Office, 1975.

Cross, Donna Woolfork. *Media Speak*. New York: New American Library, Mentor Books, 1983.

Gambiez, C. *The Use of the Media at School to Prepare Youngsters for Life*. Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe, 1982.

Henderson, Jim. *Mediascan*. Toronto: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1976.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

McLuhan, Marshall; Hutchon, Kathryn; and McLuhan, Eric. *City as Classroom: Understanding Language and Media*. Richmond Hill, Ont.: Irwin Publishing, 1977.

———. *Teaching the Media*. London: Comedia, 1985.

Minkkinen, Sirka. *A General Curriculum Model for Mass Media Education*. Paris: UNESCO, 1978.

New South Wales Department of Education. *Guidelines to Media Education*. Sydney, Australia: New South Wales Department of Education, 1981.

Owen, David, and Hunt, Patrick. *Teacher's Guide to Introduction to the Mass Media I*. Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1985.

———. *Understanding the Mass Media*. Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1985.

Postman, Neil. *Teaching as a Conserving Activity*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1979.

Rissover, Frederic, and Birch, David C., eds. *Mass Media and the Popular Arts*. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983.

FILM AND TELEVISION

Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1972.

Bennet, Tony; Boyd-Bowman, S.; et al. *Popular Television and Film*. London: The British Film Institute, 1981.

Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke. *Media Literacy 1. Television: A Resource Book for Junior-Middle School*. Etobicoke, Ont.: Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke, 1984.

Boles, Derek. "Understanding Prime Time". *Indirections*. September 1984.

Booth, David; Barton, Robert; and Young, Douglas. *Film*. Toronto: Longman, 1972.

Curriculum and Staff Development Services, Board of Education for the City of North York. *Elementary Screen Education Guidelines*. North York: Board of Education for the City of North York, 1982.

Feldman, Seth, ed. *Take Two*. Richmond Hill, Ont.: Irwin Publishing, 1984.

Giannetti, Louis D. *Understanding Movies*. 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976.

Gross, Larry. "Television and Violence". In *Television Awareness Training*, edited by Ben Logan, pp. 19-24. New York: Media Action Research Center, 1979.

Harcourt, Peter. *Movies and Mythologies*. Toronto: CBC Publications, 1977.

Johnson, Ron, and Bone, Jan. *Understanding Film*. 3rd ed. Lincolnwood, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1986.

Jowett, Garth, and Linton, James M. *Movies as Mass Communication*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1980.

Kael, Pauline. *I Lost It at the Movies*. New York: Bantam Books, 1965.

Karp, Walter. "The Soaps du Jour". *Channels Magazine*, July/August 1985, pp. 37-38.

Knight, Arthur. *The Liveliest Art*. New York: New American Library, 1979.

Lacey, Richard. *Seeing With Feeling: Film in the Classroom*. Toronto: W.B. Saunders, 1972.

Laybourne, Kit. *The Animation Book*. New York: Crown Publishers, 1979.

Livesay, Jack, and Hyne, Lynne. *Let's Play TV in the Classroom*. Toronto: TVOntario, 1980.

Mankiewicz, Frank, and Swerdlow, Joel. *Remote Control: Television and the Manipulation of American Life*. New York: Times Books, 1978.

Medved, Harry, and Dreyfuss, Randy. *The Fifty Worst Films of All Times*. New York: Popular Library, 1978.

Monaco, James. *How to Read a Film*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Phillips, William N. *Analyzing Films: A Practical Guide*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985.

Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. New York: Viking, 1985.

Primeau, Ronald. *Rhetoric of Television*. New York: Longman, 1979.

Scholes, Robert. *Semiotics and Interpretation*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982.

Schrank, Jeffrey. *Understanding Mass Media*. 3rd ed. Lincolnwood, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1986.

Singer, Dorothy, and Singer, Jerome. *Getting the Most Out of TV*. Toronto: Gage, 1981.

Television Literacy: Critical Television Viewing Skills. Boston: Hendron Press, 1981.

Thomsen, William F. *Media and Communication*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972.

TVOntario. *Behind the Third Eye: A Portapak Handbook*. Toronto: TVOntario, 1973.

———. *Picture This: A Practical Guide to Learning Through Videotaping*. Toronto: TVOntario, 1977.

———. *Television and Your Child*. Toronto: TVOntario, 1985.

———. *The Third Eye*. Toronto: TVOntario, 1972.

Whetmore, Edward Jay. *Mediamerica: Form, Content, and Consequence of Mass Communication*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1979.

Wolfe, Morris. *Jolts: The TV Wasteland and the Canadian Oasis*. Toronto: James Lorimer, 1985.

Zettl, Herbert. *Sight, Sound, Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1973.

RADIO

Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1986.

Stewart, Sandy. *From Coast to Coast*. Toronto: Gage, 1975.

POPULAR MUSIC AND ROCK VIDEO

Hibbard, Don J., and Laleialoha, Carol. *The Role of Rock*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1983.

Shore, Michael. *The Rolling Stone Book of Rock Video*. New York: Rolling Stone Press, 1984.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Craven, George M. *Object and Image: An Introduction to Photography*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975.

Curriculum and Staff Services, Board of Education for the City of North York. *Elementary Screen Education Guidelines*. North York: Board of Education for the City of North York, 1982.

Rissover, Frederic. "Basic Visual Elements of Photographs and Motion Pictures". In *Mass Media and the Popular Arts*, edited by Frederic Rissover and David Birch, pp. 406-23. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983.

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1977.

PRINT

Cramer, Ward. *Reading Beyond the Headline*. Portland, Maine: J. Weston Walch, 1973.

MacLean, Eleanor. *Between the Lines: How to Detect Bias and Propaganda in the News and Everyday Life*. Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1981.

Report of the Royal Commission on Newspapers. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1981.

Stewart, Walter. *Canadian Newspapers: The Inside Story*. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1980.

Wolfe, Tom. *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965.

Wood, Pamela. *You and Aunt Arie: A Guide to Cultural Journalism*. Nederland, Col.: Great America Printing Co., 1975.

Zwicker, Barrie, and MacDonald, Dick. *The News: Inside the Canadian Media*. Ottawa: Deneau, 1982.

ADVERTISING

McGuiness, Joe. *The Selling of the President*. New York: Simon & Schuster, Washington Square Press, 1980.

Morrow, James, and Suid, Murray. *Media and Kids: Real World Learning in the Schools*. Rochelle Park, N.J.: Hayden Book Co., 1977.

Schrank, Jeffrey. "The Language of Advertising Claims". *Media and Methods* 10 (March 1974): 44-51.

Singer, Benjamin D. *Advertising and Society*. Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley, 1986.

White, Robert A. "Critical View of Advertising". *Communication Research Trends* 3:3 (1982), p. 2.

Williamson, Judith. *Decoding Advertising: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising*. Salem, N.H.: Merrimack Book Service, 1978.

SEXUALITY IN THE MEDIA

Bolen, Jean. *Goddesses in Every Woman: A New Psychology of Women*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985.

Brownmiller, Susan. *Femininity*. New York: Ballantine, 1984.

The CRTC Report on Sex Role Stereotyping in the Broadcast Media. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1986.

Goffman, Erving. *Gender Advertisements*. Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1979.

Lederer, Laura, ed. *Take Back the Night*. New York: Bantam Books, 1980.

Tolmach, Robin, and Scherr, Raquel. *Face Value: The Politics of Beauty*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ministry of Education and the Ontario Teachers' Federation wish to acknowledge the contributions of the many persons who participated in the development and validation of the media-literacy resource document.

PROJECT CO-ORDINATORS

Jerry George, Centre for Secondary and Adult Education, Ministry of Education
Pierre Lalonde, Ontario Teachers' Federation

WRITING TEAM

Barry Duncan, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke (chair of writing team)
Neil Anderson, Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
Derek Boles, York Region Board of Education
Susan G. Cole (freelance writer)
Al Emid (television producer)
Elizabeth Flynn, Metropolitan Separate School Board
James Fowlie, York Region Board of Education
Claudine Goller, Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
Keith McDonald (television producer)
John Pungente, S.J., Jesuit Communication Project
Rick Shepherd, Board of Education for the City of North York
Bill Smart, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Wayne Wheeler, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Deborah Bernstein, Canadian Telefilm
Arn Bowers, Faculty of Education, University of Toronto
Alan Colthart, Peel Board of Education
Jack Livesley (educator/producer)
Wayne McNanney, Waterloo County Board of Education
Gino Nicodemo, London and Middlesex County Roman Catholic School Board
Lynda Pogue, Board of Education for the City of North York
Fred Rainsberry, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (professor emeritus)
Chris Worsnop, Peel Board of Education

VALIDATORS

Don Angus, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Darrel Barrs, Board of Education for the City of North York
Brigitte Berinstain, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Joan Bolt, London and Middlesex County Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Clint Brumwell, Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
Aimé Caron, Kenora District Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Gray Cavanaugh, Central Ontario Regional Office, Ministry of Education
Brenda Cicci, Kenora District Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Lin Darmann Clunie, Board of Education for the City of North York
George Edelstein, Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
Steven Feldman, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Jan Goodman, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Nigel Gough, Western Ontario Regional Office, Ministry of Education
Robert Grynol, Fort Frances–Rainy River Board of Education
Dorothy Hansen, Kenora District Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Diane Howe, Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
Peter Iorns, Kenora District Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Glenn Lawson, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Brian McAndrews, Frontenac-Lennox and Addington County Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Callie Markotich, Frontenac-Lennox and Addington County Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Larry Marshman, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Michael Perry, Eastern Regional Office, Ministry of Education
Greeba Quigley, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Michael Quinlan, London and Middlesex County Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Sean Roberts, Frontenac-Lennox and Addington County Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Noel Rozenveld, London and Middlesex County Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Christine Rutland, Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
Charles Stock, Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
Margaret West, Frontenac-Lennox and Addington County Roman Catholic Separate School Board
Sue Wilcox, Kenora District Roman Catholic Separate School Board

The Ministry of Education and the Ontario Teachers' Federation wish to express their appreciation to the Association for Media Literacy and to all groups and individuals who made contributions to this resource document during the development and validation stages.

88-035
ISBN 0-7729-5090-3
© Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1989